TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA
TURTLES
THE IDW COLLECTION V7

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IDW

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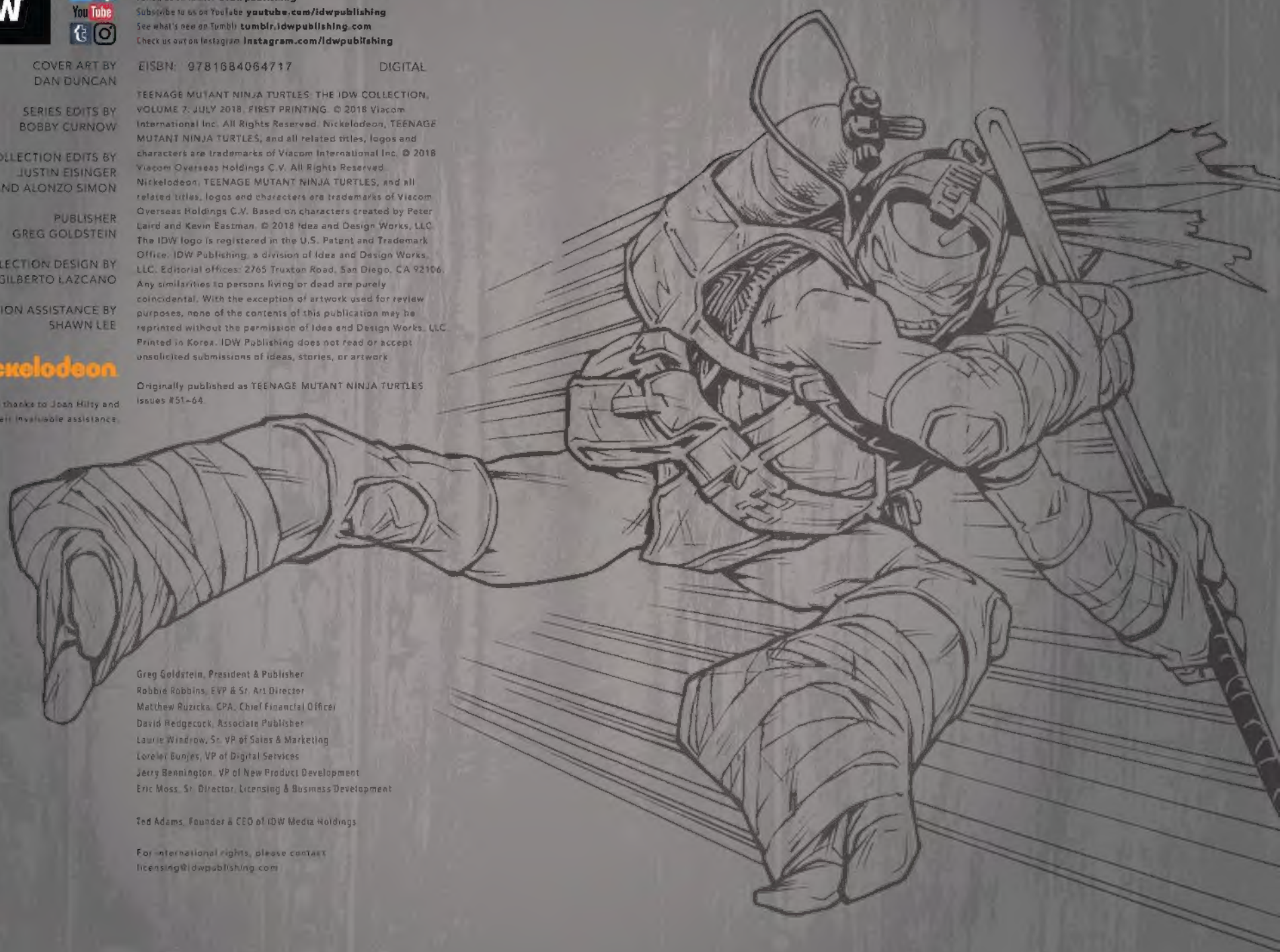

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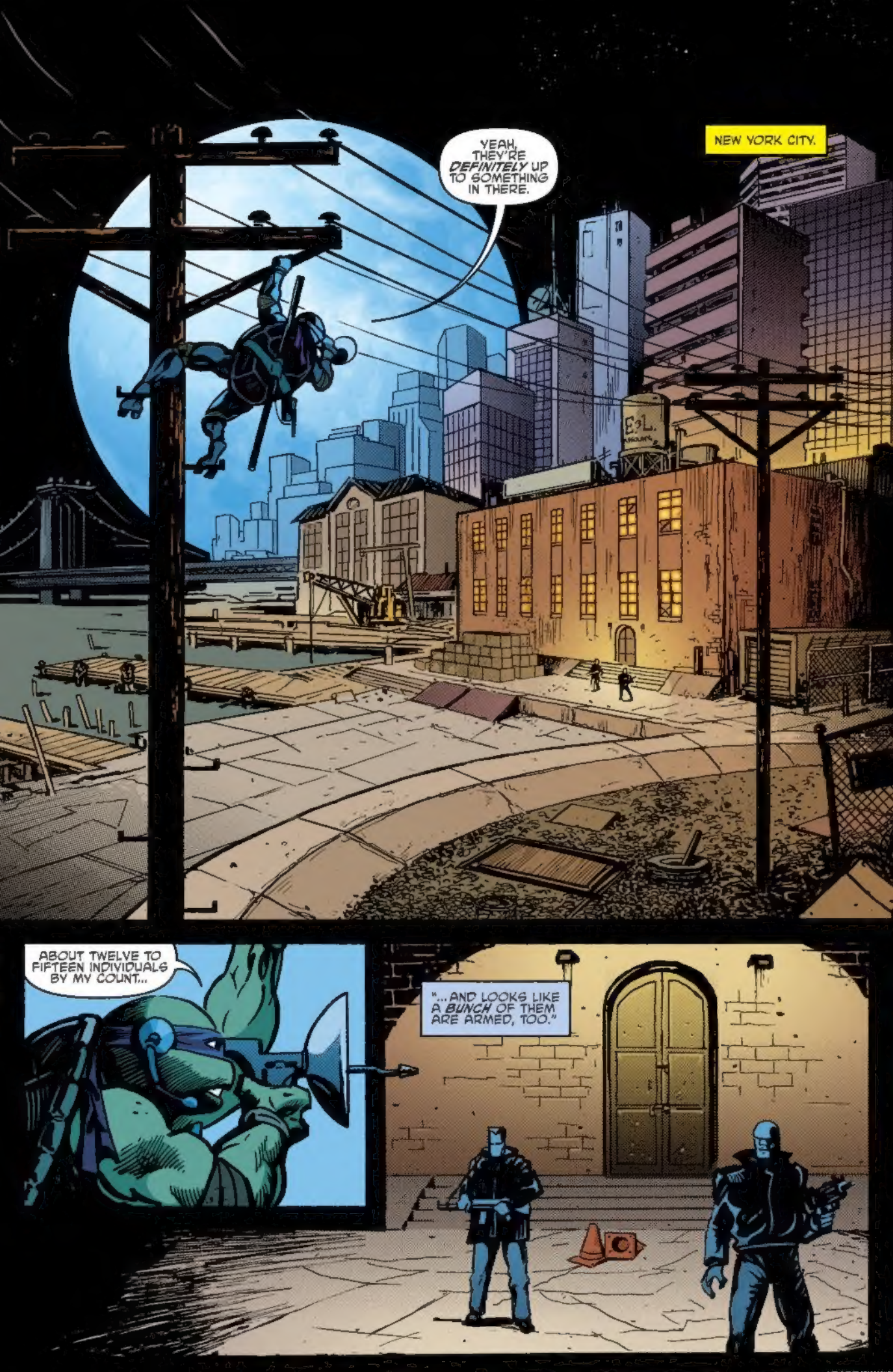

NEW YORK CITY.
YEAH, THEY'RE *DEFINITELY* UP TO SOMETHING IN THERE.
ABOUT TWELVE TO FIFTEEN INDIVIDUALS BY MY COUNT...
"...AND LOOKS LIKE A *BUNCH* OF THEM ARE ARMED, TOO."

GOT NEWS FOR YA, DON...
NO, RAPH! WAIT!
KONK
GNF!
WHO THE—
HRK!
KRAK
...I DON'T NEED ANY OF HAROLD'S FANCY-SCHMANCY SPY GADGETS TO FIGURE THAT OUT.
DAMMIT, RAPH!
I TOLD YOU TO HOLD UP.
WHATEVER. I WAS GETTIN' STIFF CROUCHIN' IN THE SHADOWS LIKE THAT. AND BORED.
BORED STIFF. AHEM.
WELL, WHILE YOU WERE BUMBLING IN HALF-COCKED, YOU DIDN'T LET ME FINISH WHAT I WAS SAYING.

THERE'S SOMETHING... *OFF* ABOUT SOME OF THE BAD GUYS INSIDE.
WHATEVER THEY'RE WEARING, IT'S *PLAYING HAVOC* WITH HAROLD'S "FANCY-SCHMANCY SPY GADGETS," THAT'S FOR SURE.

COPY THAT, DONNIE. RALLY ON US FOR THE NEXT STEP.
WE'RE *NINJA*, REMEMBER?
WHY WE WASTIN' TIME *HIDIN'* THESE PUNKS, LEO?

STRIKE HARD AND FADE AWAY...
INTO THE NIGHT– YEAH, YEAH, I KNOW.
THING IS, I AIN'T *READY* TO CALL IT A NIGHT YET.
NEITHER AM I.

BUT WE DO IT *MY* WAY THIS TIME, SO HOLD YOUR HORSES.
WHATEVER.
GUYS, I'M HERE...

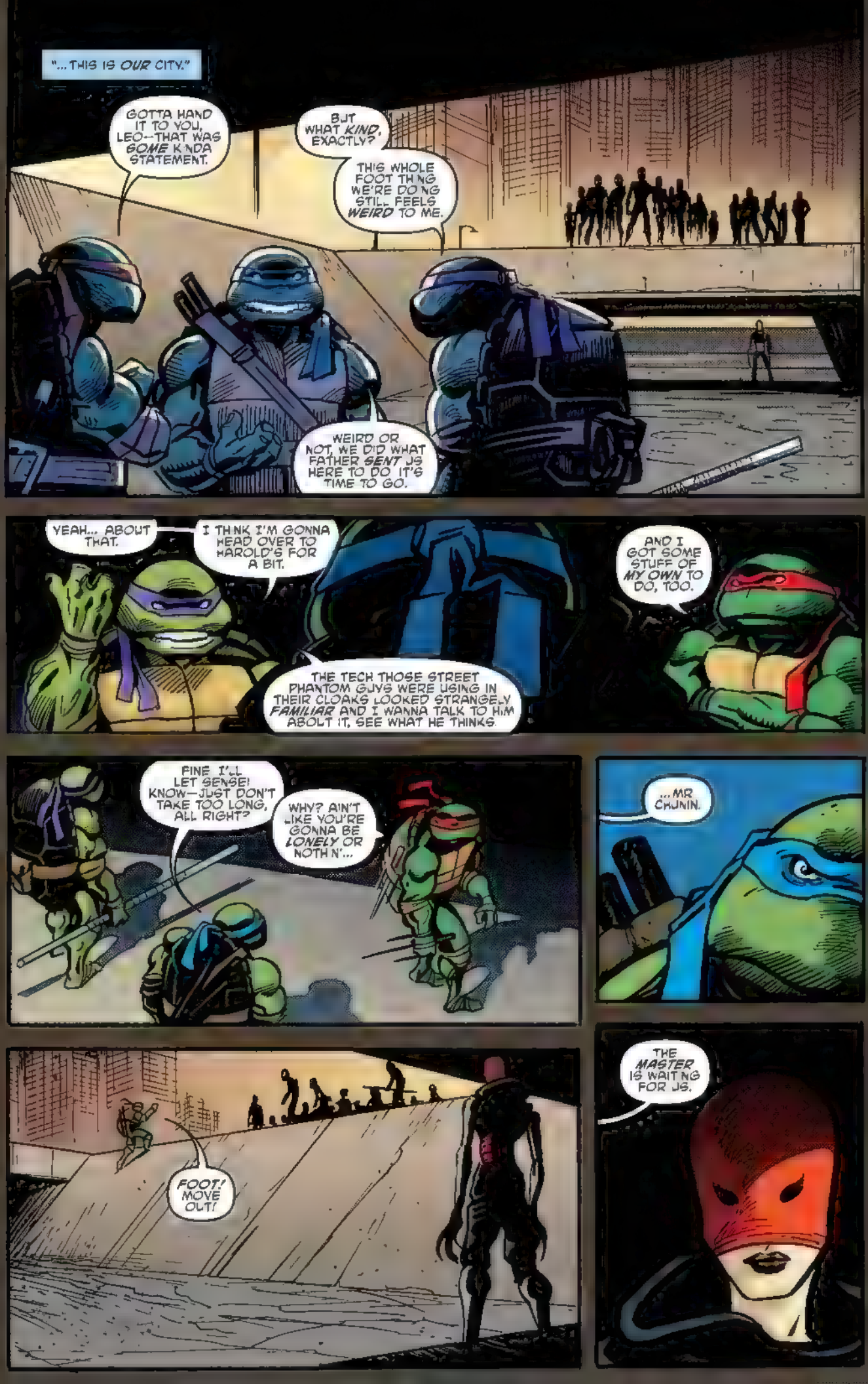
...WHAT NOW?
NOW?

STRIKE HARD!
SMASH
WHO THE--?
WASTE 'EM!
BRATTA BRATTA BRATTA BRATTA
WELL, HEL-LO!
WHAT THE HELL, LUPO?! THOUGHT YOUR BOYS HAD THIS PLACE SECURED.
SO DID I.
KEEP SHOOTIN', YA MOOKS!
GEEZ, NICE WELCOMIN' COMMITTEE. AND WHAT'S UP WITH THE DUDES IN THE BLANKETS?
CLOAKS, AND I'M PRETTY SURE THEY WERE CAUSING THE ELECTRONIC DISTORTION BEFORE.
WORRY ABOUT THAT LATER. WE CAME HERE TO MAKE A STATEMENT, SO LET'S MAKE IT.
FOOT! ATTACK!

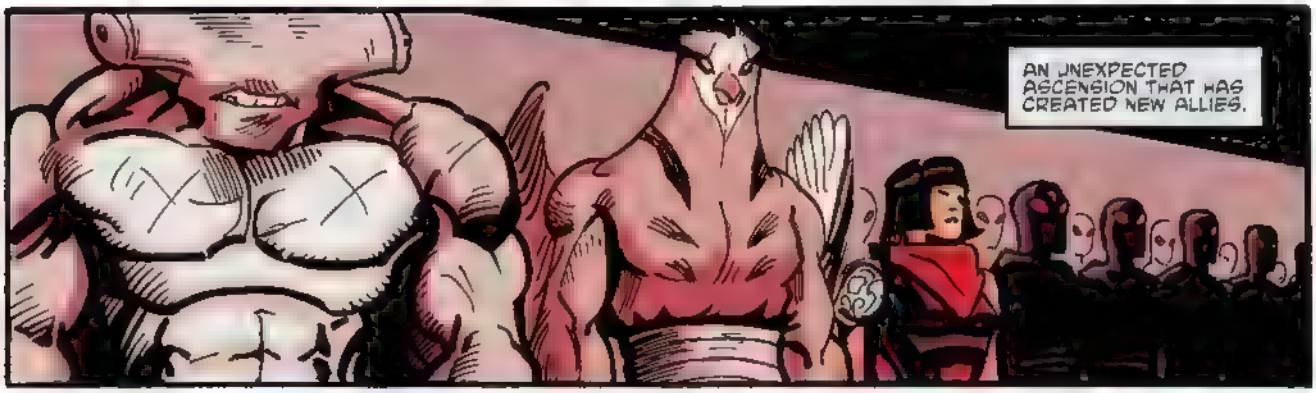
TAKE THEM! BUT REMEMBER— NO KILLING!
HEY, DON, GUESS WHAT!
WHAT?
I AIN'T BORED ANYMORE!
GLAD TO HEAR YOU'RE ENTERTA NED. THOUGH SOMETH.NG TELLS ME...
"...THESE GOONS SURE AREN'T."
WHAT DO WE DO, JAMMER?
WE GET OUT OF HERE, MAZE. THAT'S WHAT. THE BOSS DON'T WANT US MIXIN' IT UP JUST YET.
BUT... WHAT ABOUT LUPO?
WHAT ABOUT HIM? IF THE IDIOT CAN'T TAKE CARE OF HIS BUSINESS...
... THEN HE'S GETTIN' EXACTLY WHAT HE DESERVES.
"WHOA..."

...DID YOU GUYS SEE THAT?
TALK ABOUT FADIN' AWAY.
WHO THE HECK WERE THOSE GUYS?
DON'T KNOW...
...BUT IT'S TIME TO END THIS.
FWAK
YOU AND I NEED TO TALK!
UNFF!
WHOP
FOOT!
STAND DOWN!

FOOT CLAN, HUH? THOUGHT YOU NINJA FREAKS... WERE HISTORY.
YOU THOUGHT WRONG.
AND YOU'RE DONE.
URFF!
YOUR CRIME OPERATIONS STOP HERE. NOW. TONIGHT.
THIS IS JUST A SMALL CONTINGENT OF WHAT THE FOOT CLAN CAN BRING TO BEAR AGAINST ITS ENEMIES. JUST IMAGINE WHAT AN ENTIRE ARMY OF US WILL DO IF YOU DISOBEY.
YEAH? WELL, YOU MIGHT WANNA THINK REAL HARD 'FORE YOU START SPOUT N' ALL THAT BIG TALK, UNLESS YOU'RE LOOKIN' TO HAVE THE STREET PHANTOMS MAKE YOU CHOKE ON YOUR WORDS.
STREET PHANTOMS?
ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT THE ONES IN THE CLOAKS?
I AIN'T TALK N' 'BOUT NOTHIN' NO MORE, FREAK.
THEN YOU WILL BE MADE TO TALK, CRIMINA—
I SAID, STAND DOWN.
THAT'S NOT HOW WE DO THINGS ANYMORE.
LISTEN UP, SCUMBAG, AND LISTEN GOOD. RUMORS THAT THE FOOT CLAN HAS BECOME WEAK ARE GREATLY EXAGGERATED.
WE ARE STRONGER THAN EVER— WATCHING AND READY TO STRIKE AT ALL TIMES.
SO SPREAD THE WORD FAR AND WIDE...


"...THIS IS OUR CITY."
GOTTA HAND IT TO YOU, LEO--THAT WAS SOME KINDA STATEMENT.
BUT WHAT KIND, EXACTLY?
THIS WHOLE FOOT THING WE'RE DOING STILL FEELS WEIRD TO ME.
WEIRD OR NOT, WE DID WHAT FATHER SENT US HERE TO DO. IT'S TIME TO GO.
YEAH... ABOUT THAT.
I THINK I'M GONNA HEAD OVER TO HAROLD'S FOR A BIT.
AND I GOT SOME STUFF OF MY OWN TO DO, TOO.
THE TECH THOSE STREET PHANTOM GUYS WERE USING IN THEIR CLOAKS LOOKED STRANGELY FAMILIAR AND I WANNA TALK TO HIM ABOUT IT, SEE WHAT HE THINKS.
FINE. I'LL LET SENSEI KNOW--JUST DON'T TAKE TOO LONG, ALL RIGHT?
WHY? AIN'T LIKE YOU'RE GONNA BE LONELY OR NOTHIN'...
...MR. CHUNIN.
FOOT! MOVE OUT!
THE MASTER IS WAITING FOR US.

WAITING.
IN TWO LIFETIMES, IT HAS *YET* TO BECOME ANY EASIER.
WAITING FOR ANSWERS.
FOR RESOLUTION.
FOR PEACE.
I HAD HOPED THE *DESTRUCTION* OF MY ANCIENT ENEMY WOULD AT LONG LAST ALLOW FOR THESE THINGS TO ENTER MY LIFE.
INSTEAD, HIS DEATH HAS ONLY BROUGHT MORE CONFUSION, MORE CHAOS.
ONCE OROKU SAKI HAD FALLEN, I WAS RAISED TO MASTER OF THE FOOT CLAN.
THERE WAS A TIME WHEN HAVING SUCH A TITLE BESTOWED UPON ME WOULD HAVE BEEN THE ULTIMATE HONOR.
NOW, HOWEVER, IT IS SIMPLY *ONE MORE BURDEN* I AM HONOR-BOUND TO BEAR.
FOR THE SAFETY OF MY BELOVED FAMILY.
AND FOR THE SANCTITY OF THE GREAT CITY WE CALL HOME.


AN UNEXPECTED ASCENSION THAT HAS CREATED NEW ALLIES.

EXPOSED ANCIENT AND DANGEROUS MYSTERIES.

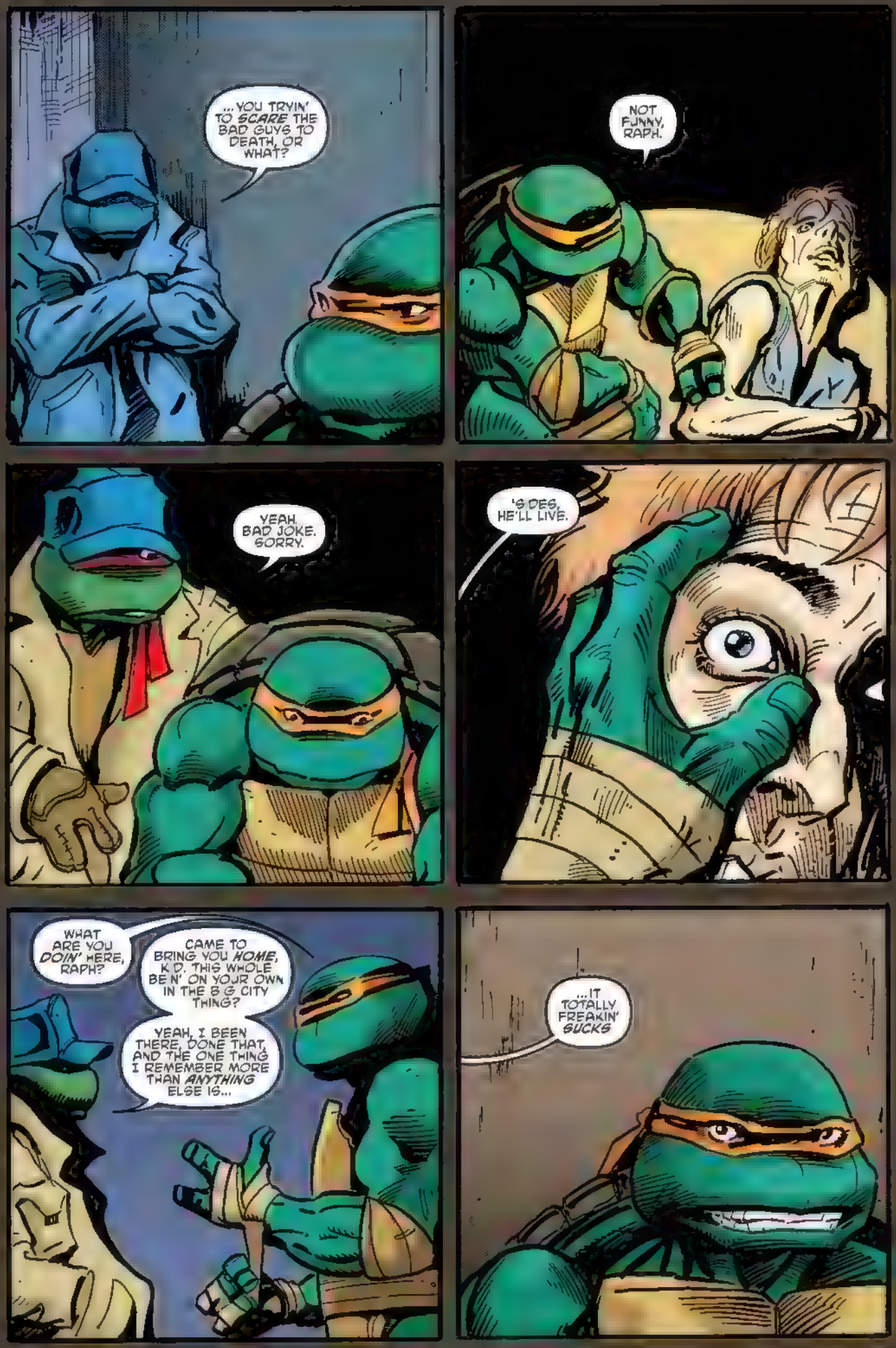
LOOSED DANGEROUS ENEMIES WHOSE LOYALTIES *DIED* WITH THE SHREDDER.

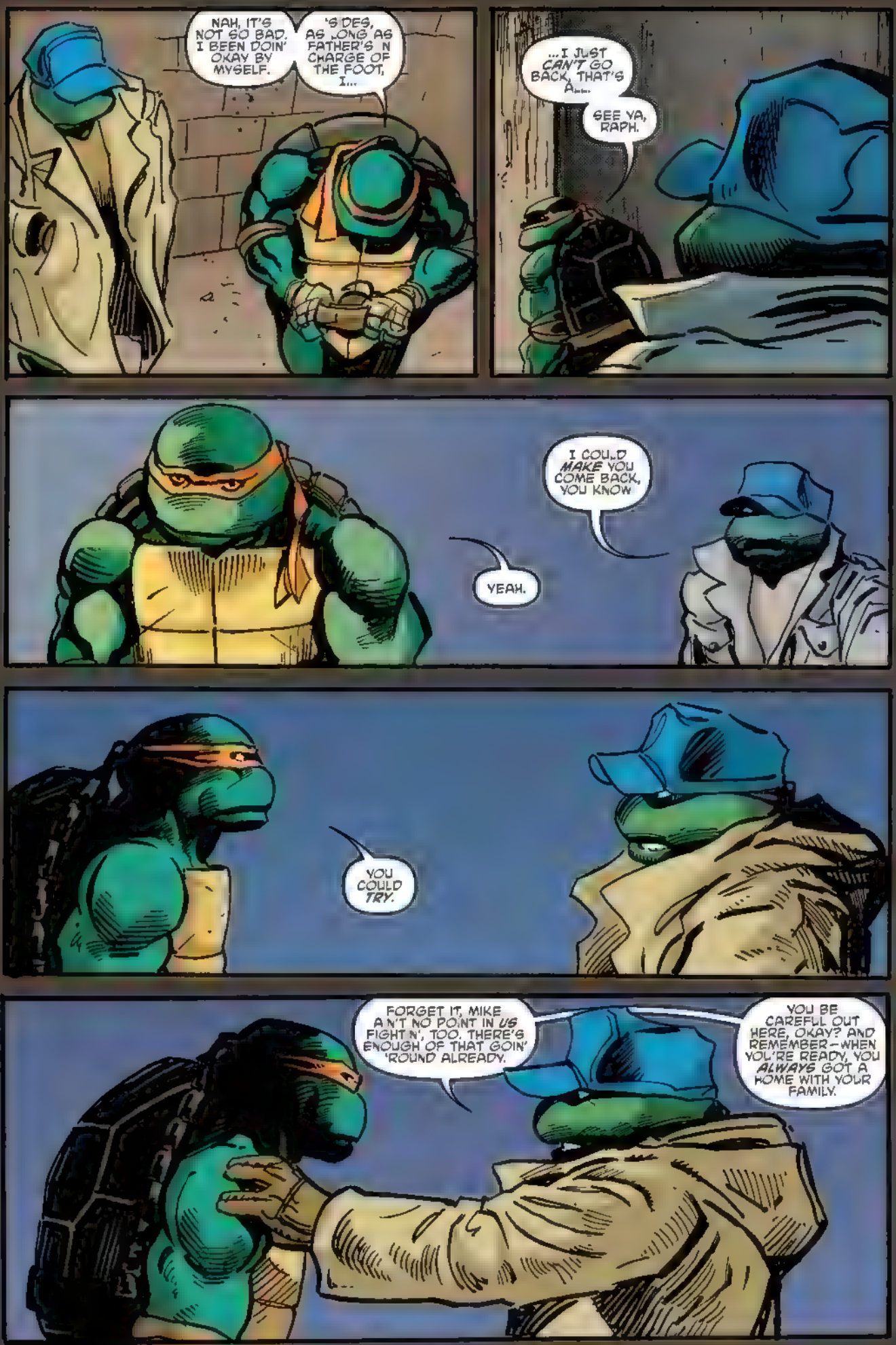
AND HAS DRIVEN AWAY THE *ONE BRIGHT LIGHT* THAT SHONE UNCEASINGLY THROUGH SO MUCH DARKNESS.

ALL THESE THINGS... AND I FEAR ONLY *MORE* HARDSHIPS LOOM.
BUT AS MASTER OF THE FOOT CLAN— AS *JONIN*—IT IS MY DUTY TO SEE MY LOYAL NINJA THROUGH WHATEVER STORMS AWAIT US.
SOON ENOUGH, WE WILL LEARN IF I HAVE MADE THE *RIGHT* DECISION.
FOR MY FAMILY FOR THIS CITY.
SOON ENOUGH, YES, AND YET IT *NEVER* GETS EASIER...

...THE WAITING.
I TOL' YOU, OL' WOMAN...
ROBS
...GIVE ME THAT... NRG... FREAKIN' PURSE NOW!
AND I SAID... UNF... NO!
YOU HEARD THE LADY, JERKWAD!
WOOSH
KONK
GAHH!

LEAVE THE PURGE ALONE.
GOOD LORD ALMIGHTY.
WHAT... IS... THAT?
RUN!
NO! WAIT! I'M NOT—
BONK
—A MONSTER.
CR PES, LITTLE BRO...


...YOU TRYIN' TO SCARE THE BAD GUYS TO DEATH, OR WHAT?
NOT FUNNY, RAPH.
YEAH, BAD JOKE. SORRY.
'S DES, HE'LL LIVE.
WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' HERE, RAPH?
CAME TO BRING YOU HOME, K.D. THIS WHOLE BE N' ON YOUR OWN IN THE B G CITY THING?
YEAH, I BEEN THERE, DONE THAT, AND THE ONE THING I REMEMBER MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IS...
...IT TOTALLY FREAKIN' SUCKS

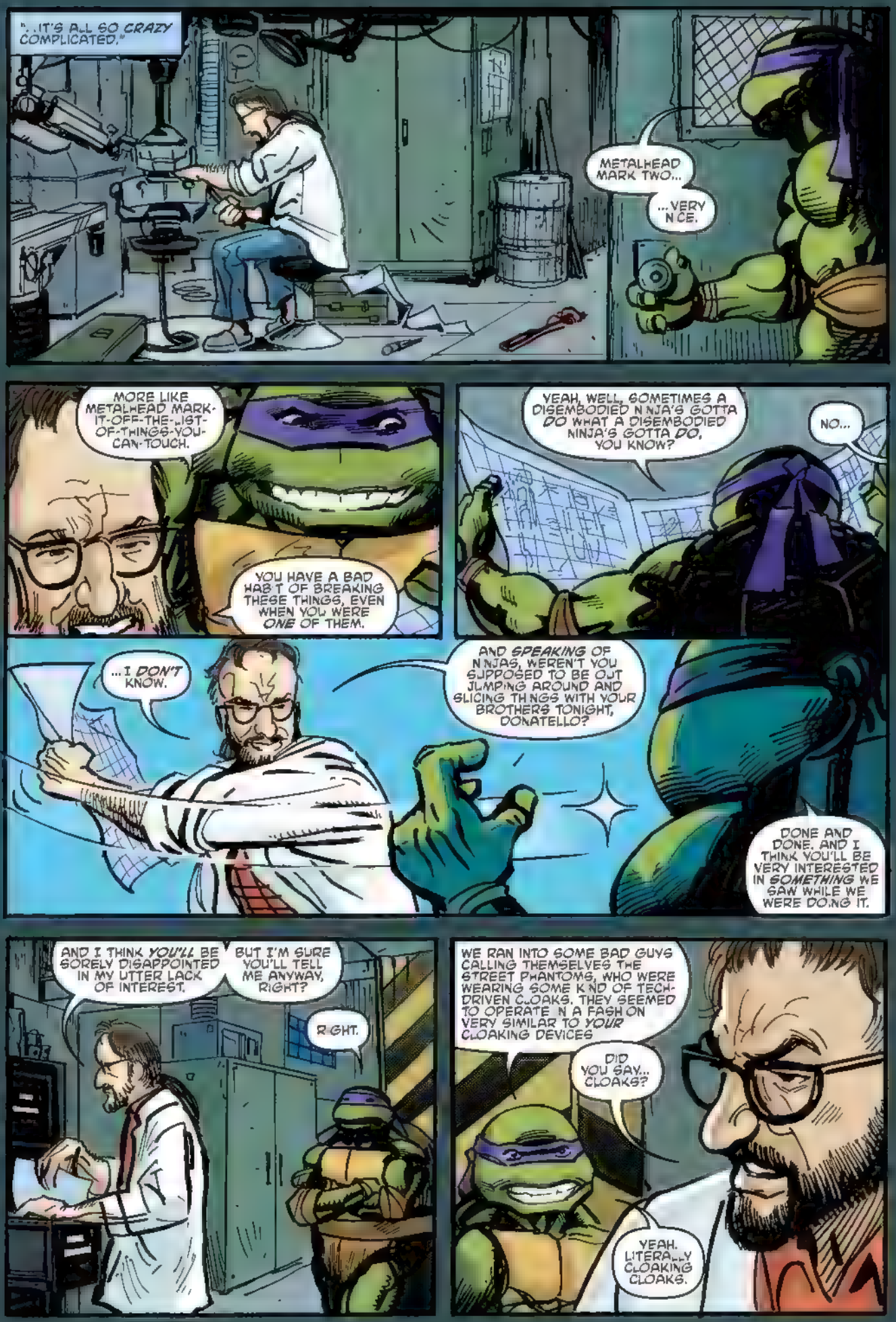

NAH, IT'S NOT SO BAD. I BEEN DOIN' OKAY BY MYSELF.
'S DES, AS LONG AS FATHER'S N CHARGE OF THE FOOT, I...
...I JUST CAN'T GO BACK, THAT'S A...
SEE YA, RAPH.
I COULD MAKE YOU COME BACK, YOU KNOW
YEAH.
YOU COULD TRY.
FORGET IT, MIKE A'N'T NO POINT IN US FIGHT'N', TOO. THERE'S ENOUGH OF THAT GOIN' 'ROUND ALREADY.
YOU BE CAREFUL OUT HERE, OKAY? AND REMEMBER—WHEN YOU'RE READY, YOU ALWAYS GOT A HOME WITH YOUR FAMILY.

YOU KNOW, THAT DUDE'S NOT WRONG JUST M GHT NOT BE THE *RIGHT HOME* HE'S THINKIN' OF.
WHO—?
OR THE *RIGHT* FAMILY.
AGENT WINTER, THIS IS COMMAND. WHAT'S YOLR *STATUS?* OVER.
WINTER HERE. I'VE GOT AN ACTIVE BEAD ON THREE MJTANTS. ALL LOOK TO BE OF THE REPT L AN VARIETY.
WHAT ARE MY *ORDERS,* S R? OVER.
REMAIN DISCREET AND CONT NJE RECONNAISSANCE OPS. *UNTIL* I TELL YOU OTHERWISE...

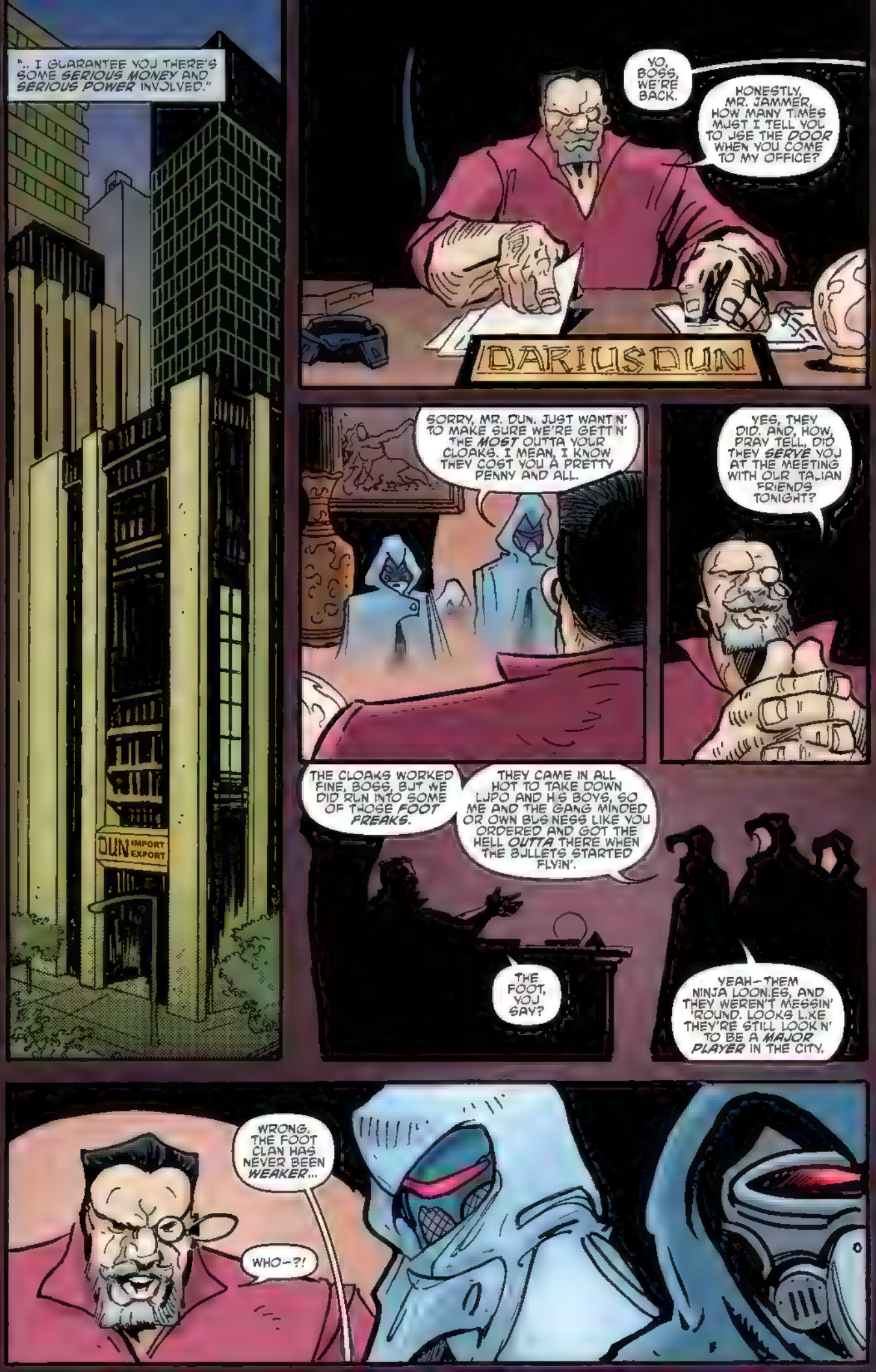
"...DO NOT ENGAGE THE SUBJECTS."
I HAVE SOME TEA AND FOOD FOR YOU, KITSUNE.
I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND THE INTRUSION.
NOT IN THE LEAST, MISS O'NEIL...
...PLEASE PLACE THE TRAY ON THE TABLE NEAR MY BED. AND THANK YOU FOR THIS COURTESY.
YOU'RE WELCOME. THOUGH, I'M NOT SO SURE IT'S WHAT I'D CALL A COURTESY—
—CONSIDERING YOU'RE UNDER HOUSE ARREST AND ALL.
I MEAN, SINCE KARAI LEFT TO JAPAN FOR A WHILE, SOMEBODY'S GOTTA MAKE SURE YOU HAVE FOOD.
AND TODAY THAT SOMEBODY IS YOU...
...SO, AGAIN, YOU HAVE MY SINCEREST GRATITUDE.
LIKE I SAID, NO PROBLEM.
AND YET... I SENSE AN AURA OF PROBLEMS SURROUNDING YOU, CHILD, AS IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING SOME KIND OF SEVERE UPHEAVAL IN YOUR OWN LIFE.
I AM TOLD YOU HAVE ONLY RECENTLY BEEN AWAY ON AN EXTENDED JOURNEY—
—PERHAPS YOU EXPERIENCED UNEXPECTED TROUBLES DURING YOUR TRAVELS?
I... UH... YES.
YES, AS A MATTER OF FACT, I DID.

IF YOU WILL EXCUSE MY PRYING, WAS IT THE YOUNG MAN YOU ARE SO FOND OF WHO BROUGHT YOU THESE TROUBLES?
CASEY? YEAH, SURE— WE HAD OUR MOMENTS IT WAS A LONG TRIP.
BUT, REALLY, THE BIGGEST PROBLEMS...
...CAME FROM YOUR SIBLINGS.
MY... SIBLINGS?
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, GIRL?
LOOK—YOU MAY THINK YOU HAVE EVERYONE FOOLED WITH YOUR MIND GAMES, BUT I KNOW ALL ABOUT THE LITTLE WORLD-CONQUERING CONTEST YOU AND YOUR FREAKY FAMILY ARE PLAYING.
AND I FULLY INTEND TO MAKE SURE NONE OF YOU COME OUT ON TOP.
AND I AM SURE I DO NOT KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN, CHILD.
PLEASE—DON'T INSULT MY INTELLIGENCE, KITSUNE. THIS REALLY WASN'T A COURTESY CALL. I KNOW YOU'RE ONLY ALLOWING YOURSELF TO BE UNDER HOUSE ARREST—JUST ANOTHER MOVE IN THE GAME, RIGHT?
WELL, GUESS WHAT—I'M PLAYING NOW, TOO.
IT APPEARS THE GAME HAS CHANGED, MY PET.
THINGS WILL HAVE TO ACCELERATE.

OH, HEY, APRIL. YOU HEADING OUT?
YEAH. GONNA GO SPEND SOME TIME WITH MY PARENTS AT THE STORE AND THEN CATCH SOME SHUT-EYE. IT'S BEEN A LONG MONTH.
TELL ME ABOUT IT.
PLEASE SAY HI TO YOUR FAMILY AND CASEY FOR ME.
WILL DO. LATER, LEO!
MY SON...
...HOW DID YOU AND YOUR BROTHERS FARE TONIGHT?
I GUESS AS GOOD AS CAN BE EXPECTED, MASTER.
NOBODY GOT KILLED AND WE DELIVERED THE MESSAGE YOU ASKED US TO.
BUT THERE WAS ONE SURPRISE.
SURPRISE?
YEAH. LOOKS LIKE THERE'S A NEW TECH-HEAVY GANG IN TOWN CALLING THEMSELVES THE STREET PHANTOMS
CAUGHT US OFF-GUARD. THAT'S FOR SURE
WE DIDN'T GET MUCH OF A CHANCE TO SEE THEM, BUT THE WISE GUYS WE WENT AFTER SEEMED WAY MORE AFRAID OF THEM THAN US.
WORD IS SPREADING AROUND THAT THE FOOT IS NO LONGER A FORCE IN THE CITY A LOT FASTER THAN WE REALIZED.
INDEED.
THEN WE MUST CONTINUE TO COMBAT THESE RUMORS AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY.
SHOULD A POWER VACUUM BE ALLOWED TO OPEN, CHAOS WILL ENGULF THIS CITY AS FACTIONS BATTLE FOR CONTROL. THIS SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF THESE STREET PHANTOMS IS CLEAR EVIDENCE OF THAT.
NO. THE FOOT CLAN MUST CONTINUE TO DOMINATE.
IF... IF YOU SAY SO, MASTER.
I KNOW THIS EDICT TROUBLES YOU, MY SON, AND I WISH IT WAS NOT NECESSARY. BUT THIS IS THE DESTINY WE HAVE BEEN DEALT, AND IT IS OUR SWORN DUTY TO SEE IT THROUGH.
BETTER THAT WE RULE AND ULTIMATELY SAVE LIVES, THAN TO ALLOW A VILLAINOUS FORCE TO HOLD SWAY OVER THE CITY.
I KNOW, FATHER. IT'S JUST... WHEN YOU SAY IT LIKE THAT, IT ALL SOUNDS SO EASY. WHEN, REALLY...


"...IT'S ALL SO CRAZY COMPLICATED."
METALHEAD MARK TWO...
...VERY NICE.
MORE LIKE METALHEAD MARK-IT-OFF-THE-LIST-OF-THINGS-YOU-CAN-TOUCH.
YOU HAVE A BAD HABIT OF BREAKING THESE THINGS, EVEN WHEN YOU WERE ONE OF THEM.
YEAH, WELL, SOMETIMES A DISEMBODIED NINJA'S GOTTA DO WHAT A DISEMBODIED NINJA'S GOTTA DO, YOU KNOW?
NO...
...I DON'T KNOW.
AND SPEAKING OF NINJAS, WEREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE OUT JUMPING AROUND AND SLICING THINGS WITH YOUR BROTHERS TONIGHT, DONATELLO?
DONE AND DONE. AND I THINK YOU'LL BE VERY INTERESTED IN SOMETHING WE SAW WHILE WE WERE DOING IT.
AND I THINK YOU'LL BE SORELY DISAPPOINTED IN MY UTTER LACK OF INTEREST.
BUT I'M SURE YOU'LL TELL ME ANYWAY, RIGHT?
RIGHT.
WE RAN INTO SOME BAD GUYS CALLING THEMSELVES THE STREET PHANTOMS, WHO WERE WEARING SOME KIND OF TECH-DRIVEN CLOAKS. THEY SEEMED TO OPERATE IN A FASHION VERY SIMILAR TO YOUR CLOAKING DEVICES
DID YOU SAY... CLOAKS?
YEAH. LITERALLY CLOAKING CLOAKS.

THERE WAS MORE, THOUGH, BESIDES THE FACT THAT THEY PLAYED HAVOC WITH THE INFRARED, THOSE PHANTOM GUYS WERE ABLE TO ESCAPE BY PHASING THROUGH THE FLOOR.
I MEAN, THEY ACTUALLY BECAME INTANGIBLE BEFORE OUR EYES AND SANK INTO THE GROUND.
I'LL BE A..
WHAT'S WRONG? HAVE YOU COME ACROSS THAT KIND OF TECH BEFORE, HAROLD?
COME ACROSS IT?
I DAMNED WELL HELPED INVENT IT.
THAT BLASTED WOMAN, I OUGHT TO-
HAROLD, WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU MUMBLING ABOUT?
THE PHASING CLOAKS! IT WAS THE LAST THING I WAS WORKING ON WITH MY FORMER PARTNER BEFORE WE HAD OUR FALLING OUT. IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE OUR SHARED MASTERPIECE, BUT INSTEAD IT BECAME MY DOWNFALL AFTER THAT INGRATE STABBED ME IN THE BACK!
WE HAD A REAL BREAKTHROUGH- TOP OF THE LINE LIKE NOTHING ELSE AT THE TIME- AND WE WERE GOING TO MAKE MILLIONS BILLIONS!
BUT THAT DAMNED GREEDY FOOL COULDN'T WAIT. SHE STOLE THE CLOAK DESIGNS AND PROCEEDED TO DESTROY MY REPUTATION WHILE SHE SHOPPED THEM TO BIGGEST BIDDER.
SHE GOT FILTHY RICH AND SHE NEARLY RUINED ME!
"SHE?" YOUR EX-PARTNER WAS... A WOMAN?
YES, THAT'S USUALLY WHAT THAT PARTICULAR PRONOUN INDICATES, DONATELLO.
DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT?
NO-NOT AT ALL. IT'S JUST, YOU'RE SO... UM... SO... NEVER MIND.
MEH.
ALL I CAN SAY IS, IF THESE STREET PHANTOMS ARE TRAIPSING AROUND TOWN WEARING THOSE THINGS, YOU AND YOUR NINJA BROOD BETTER GET GOOD AND WORRIED, BECAUSE THEY AREN'T CHEAP... NOT BY A LONG SHOT.
WHOEVER THEIR BOSS IS...


"... I GUARANTEE YOU THERE'S SOME SERIOUS MONEY AND SERIOUS POWER INVOLVED."
DUN IMPORT EXPORT
YO, BOSS, WE'RE BACK.
HONESTLY, MR. JAMMER, HOW MANY TIMES MUST I TELL YOU TO USE THE DOOR WHEN YOU COME TO MY OFFICE?
DARIUS DUN
SORRY, MR. DUN. JUST WANT'N' TO MAKE SURE WE'RE GETT'N' THE MOST OUTTA YOUR CLOAKS. I MEAN, I KNOW THEY COST YOU A PRETTY PENNY AND ALL.
YES, THEY DID. AND, HOW, PRAY TELL, DID THEY SERVE YOU AT THE MEETING WITH OUR ITALIAN FRIENDS TONIGHT?
THE CLOAKS WORKED FINE, BOSS, BUT WE DID RUN INTO SOME OF THOSE FOOT FREAKS.
THEY CAME IN ALL HOT TO TAKE DOWN LUPO AND HIS BOYS, SO ME AND THE GANG MINDED OUR OWN BUSINESS LIKE YOU ORDERED AND GOT THE HELL OUTTA THERE WHEN THE BULLETS STARTED FLYIN'.
THE FOOT, YOU SAY?
YEAH—THEM NINJA LOONIES, AND THEY WEREN'T MESSIN' 'ROUND. LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE STILL LOOK'N' TO BE A MAJOR PLAYER IN THE CITY.
WRONG. THE FOOT CLAN HAS NEVER BEEN WEAKER...
WHO—?!

...AND THIS MUST BE REMEDIED.

art by IBRAHIM MOUSTAFA

ISSUE #52

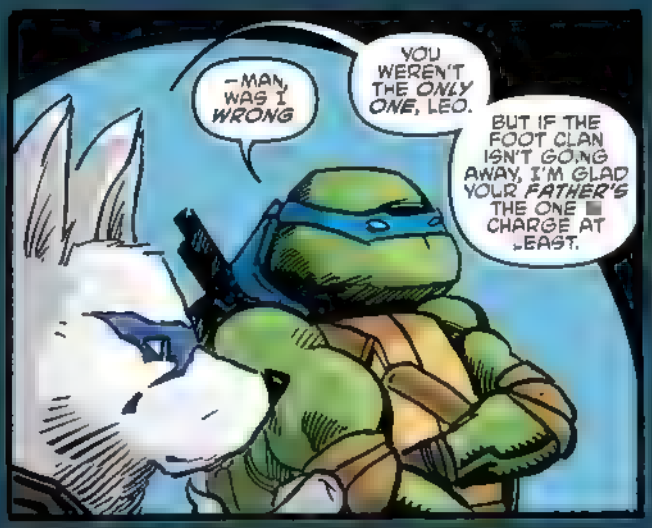
KI-YAHH!
FWAK
SMAK
FWIP
WHOP
HNNT!
FWAP

CHNT
SPAP
WUMP

AND NOW YOU.

PARTNER UP, SPREAD OUT, AND EACH OF YOU CHOOSE A *DIFFERENT* FIGHTING STYLE—TAE KWON DO, AIKIDO, JUJITSU, KARATE... DOESN'T MATTER AS LONG AS YOUR STYLE DOESN'T *MATCH* YOUR OPPONENT'S.
AND IF YOUR *OPPONENT* CHANGES FORM, *YOU* CHANGE, TOO. IN TRUE BATTLE, INFLEXIBILITY AND PREDICTABILITY WILL ONLY GET YOU *KILLED* SO DO EVERYTHING YOU CAN TO STAY *ONE STEP* AHEAD.
AND NEVER FORGET WHAT MASTER SPLINTER HAS *TAUGHT* US—CONTROL AND DISCIPLINE ARE THE *KEY ELEMENTS* TO VICTORY.
NO MATTER THE ODDS AGAINST YOU, *ALWAYS* STRIVE TO USE THEM TO TURN DISADVANTAGES INTO ADVANTAGES, IMBA..ANCE...

"... INTO BALANCE."
SO, HERE WE ARE AGAIN— TRAINING JUNIOR FOOT NINJA. DID YOU *EVER* THINK YOU'D FIND YOURSELF BACK?
NO— ESPECIALLY NOT LIKE *THIS*. ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, I FIGURED THE GAUNTLET WOULD BE THE *END* OF MY FAMILY'S INVOLVEMENT WITH THE FOOT—


—MAN, WAS I WRONG
YOU WEREN'T THE ONLY ONE, LEO.
BUT IF THE FOOT CLAN ISN'T GOING AWAY, I'M GLAD YOUR FATHER'S THE ONE IN CHARGE AT LEAST.

HOW IS MASTER SPLINTER, ANYWAY?

HE'S... TRUTHFULLY, I'M NOT SURE HOW HE IS.
I MEAN, HE'S DEAD SERIOUS ABOUT TURNING THINGS AROUND AS FAR AS THE FOOT ARE CONCERNED, BUT THE WHOLE THING WITH MIKEY TAKING OFF HAS SHAKEN HIM UP PRETTY BADLY—EVEN IF HE IS TRYING TO HIDE IT.

I DON'T KNOW, ALOPEX... MAYBE FATHER'S CONTROL AND DISCIPLINE WON'T BE ENOUGH TO GET US THROUGH THIS ONE.
HEY—THOSE THINGS HAVE DONE A PRETTY GOOD JOB SO FAR, RIGHT?
IT'S BEEN TOUGH SOMETIMES, TRUE, BUT WE'RE ALL BETTER FOR WHAT MASTER SPLINTER HAS TAUGHT US...
...EVEN MIKEY.

YEAH. YOU'RE RIGHT.
AND I HOPE YOU KNOW I REALLY AM GLAD TO HAVE YOU HERE HELPING ME OUT.

WELL, SOMEONE'S GOTTA HELP YOU WHIP THESE NEWBIES INTO SHAPE THE PROPER WAY.
THOUGH, TO BE PERFECTLY HONEST, AS FUN AS THIS IS...

"...I DO MISS HANGING OUT WITH ANGEL"
SECOND TIME AROUND
THAT ALL YOU GOT, WIMPS?
WELL, HATE TO TELL YOU, BUT I GOT PLENTY MORE.
CASEY?
WHAT...
WHOP
WHAP
...NOW?
PLENTY MORE!
GRFF!
FWUMP

DAMN HOCKEY FREAK!
CHNG
WHOA! GUESS YOU AIN'T DONE YET.
JONES...
...WHAT THE HELL'RE YOU DOIN'?
KIK
OH, HEY, ANGEL.
I AIN'T DOIN' MUCH.
GRAH!
KRAK
JUST A LITTLE COMMUNITY SERVICE IS ALL.
NO BIGGIE.

SO, WHAT - THESE GUYS TRYIN' TO *BREAK INTO* THE STORE OR SOMETHIN'?
NAH. JUST CAUGHT 'EM *LURKIN'* AROUND WHERE THEY *DON'T* BELONG.
WHICH IS *WHERE*, EXACTLY?

MY *'HOOD*, OF COURSE.

OHHH... *YOUR* 'HOOD. I GET IT. THE 'HOOD THAT *BELONGS* TO YOU.
YEAH, THAT DON'T SOUND TOO *POMPOUS* AT ALL.

"POMPOUS?"
MAN, YOU HANG AROUND THAT GEEK HAROLD FOR FIVE MINUTES AND YER *ALREADY* SOUNDIN' LIKE AN EGGHEAD.
WHATEVER.

SPEAKIN' OF SUPER-NERD, WHY AIN'T YOU WEARIN' HIS LITTLE *JUMPSUIT* TONIGHT?
LEFT IT OVER AT THE LAB—HAROLD WANTED TO DO SOME *UPGRADES* ON IT. 'SIDES, THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE NICE TO TAKE A *NIGHT OFF* FROM PATROLLIN' AND *CATCH UP* WITH YOU AND APRIL....

...THINGS GOT PRETTY *CRAZY* 'ROUND HERE WHILE YOU GUYS WERE GONE
NOT JUST *HERE*.*
*See TMNT: CASEY & APRIL B C

WHY? WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU GUYS?
NOTHIN'.
ANYWAY, APRIL'S OVER AT THE STORE WITH HER PARENTS RIGHT NOW
I'M SURE SHE'D DIG SEEIN' YOU.
AIN'T YOU COMIN'?
NAH. CAN'T. I ST..L GOTTA DO SOME ROUNDS TONIGHT.
WHAT FOR? SEEMS PRETTY QUIET RIGHT NOW.
YOU SURE YOU A'N'T JUST LOOKIN' FOR TROUB..E, JONES?
YEAH, MAYBE I AM.
OR MAYBE I'M JUST LOOK N' TO STOMP IT BEFORE IT HAS A CHANCE TO START.
WHAT THE HELL S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
MEANS I LEARNED AN IMPORTANT LESSON WHEN I WAS ON THE ROAD.
SOON AS YOU LET THE BAD GUYS THINK YOU AIN'T WATCHIN' 'EM—SOON AS YOU LET 'EM BEL EVE EVEN FOR A SECOND YER GETT N' WEAK—YOU AND EVERYONE YOJ CARE ABOUT...
...IS TOAST.

"<AH...>"
"<...THE RAT WHO WOULD BE JONIN...>"
EARLIER.
<...TO WHAT DO I OWE THE PLEASURE OF THIS VISIT FROM OUR NEW MASTER?>
<I WOULD SPEAK WITH YOU FOR A MOMENT, KITSUNE, IF YOU ARE SO INCLINED.>
<OF COURSE, HAMATO YOSHI.>
NAZAI

<PLEASE REMAIN OUTSIDE. I WILL NOT BE LONG.>
HAI!
<TEA?>
<THANK YOU. NO.>
<SO, I ASK AGAIN, WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, MASTER?>
<I SEEK ANSWERS, KITSUNE.>
<ANSWERS?>
<YES.>
<I HAVE RECEIVED INFORMATION THAT YOU—AND OTHERS OF YOUR KIND—ARE COVERTLY PLOTTING NEFARIOUS SCHEMES AGAINST THIS WORLD.>
<I WOULD KNOW EXACTLY WHAT THOSE SCHEMES ARE, AS WELL AS THE IDENTITIES OF THOSE SCHEMING THEM.>
<SURELY YOU CANNOT BELIEVE I AM INVOLVED.>
<AFTER ALL, YOU'VE HAD ME IMPRISONED HERE EVER SINCE YOUR ASCENSION TO SAKI'S THRONE.>
<CEASE YOUR SLY DRAMATICS, WITCH. WE BOTH KNOW YOU ONLY PLAY AT BEING A VICTIM AND I HAVE LITTLE PATIENCE FOR GAMES TODAY.>

<INDEED.>
<SO VERY *DIFFERENT* FROM YOUR PREDECESSOR... AND YET SO VERY MUCH THE *SAME*.>
<THIS *INFORMATION* YOU RECEIVED—I SUPPOSE IT CAME FROM OUR YOUNG *MISS O'NEIL*, HM? SHE, TOO, PAID ME AN *UNEXPECTED VISIT* EARLIER.>
<IT SEEMS ON HER RECENT JOURNEY, SHE AND HER GENTLEMAN FRIEND MADE *ACQUAINTANCES* WITH WHAT YOU DEEMED "OTHERS OF MY KIND.">
<MY *SIBLINGS*, TO BE PRECISE.>
<BUT YOU NEED NOT CONCERN YOURSELF WITH *THEM*, YOSHI. MY FAMILY IS AN AGELESS AND ANCIENT LOT AND, AS SUCH, WE ARE ALWAYS SEEKING NEW FORMS OF *AMUSEMENT* IN THIS OLD WORLD.>
<I'M CERTAIN MY BROTHER AND SISTER WERE SIMPLY *ENTERTAINING* THEMSELVES BY PLAYING A GAME WITH OUR YOUNG FRIENDS, NOTHING MORE.>
<AND I HAVE *ALREADY* TOLD YOU I HAVE *NO PATIENCE* FOR SUCH THINGS, KITSUNE. NOR DO I HAVE ANY *FAITH* IN THE *WORDS* YOU SPEAK.>
<KNOW THIS—I WILL *NOT ALLOW* LIES AND TRICKERY TO DESTROY THIS NEW OPPORTUNITY TO HONORABLY *REBUILD* THE FOOT CLAN.>
<WHY, YOU ACT AS IF I DO NOT *SHARE* YOUR WISH FOR THE GLORIOUS RESTORATION OF OUR CLAN, YOSHI.>
<IN TRUTH, YOU SLING YOUR THREATS AT THE *WRONG* TARGET—I AM NOT AN ENEMY TO YOUR CAUSE. BUT, REST ASSURED...>

"<...REAL DANGERS LURK EVERYWHERE.>"
KSHH
GNH!
YOU WOULD DARE AMBUSH YOUR MASTER, GIRL?
YOU'RE NOT A MASTER. YOU'RE JUST A FRAIL RODENT MASQUERADING AS ONE AND I WON'T STAND IDLY BY WHILE YOU INFEST THE FOOT CLAN WITH YOUR WEAKNESS.
THEN IT APPEARS YOU ARE ALONE IN YOUR COUP.
NO, RAT...
...SHE AIN'T.

HIYAH!
IT'S EASY...
HOW—?
...WHEN YOU GOT THE R GHT TOYS.
UNF!
CRAK
SMMSSH
MASTER SPL NTER, WHAT—
ELITE! STOP THE ASSASSINS!

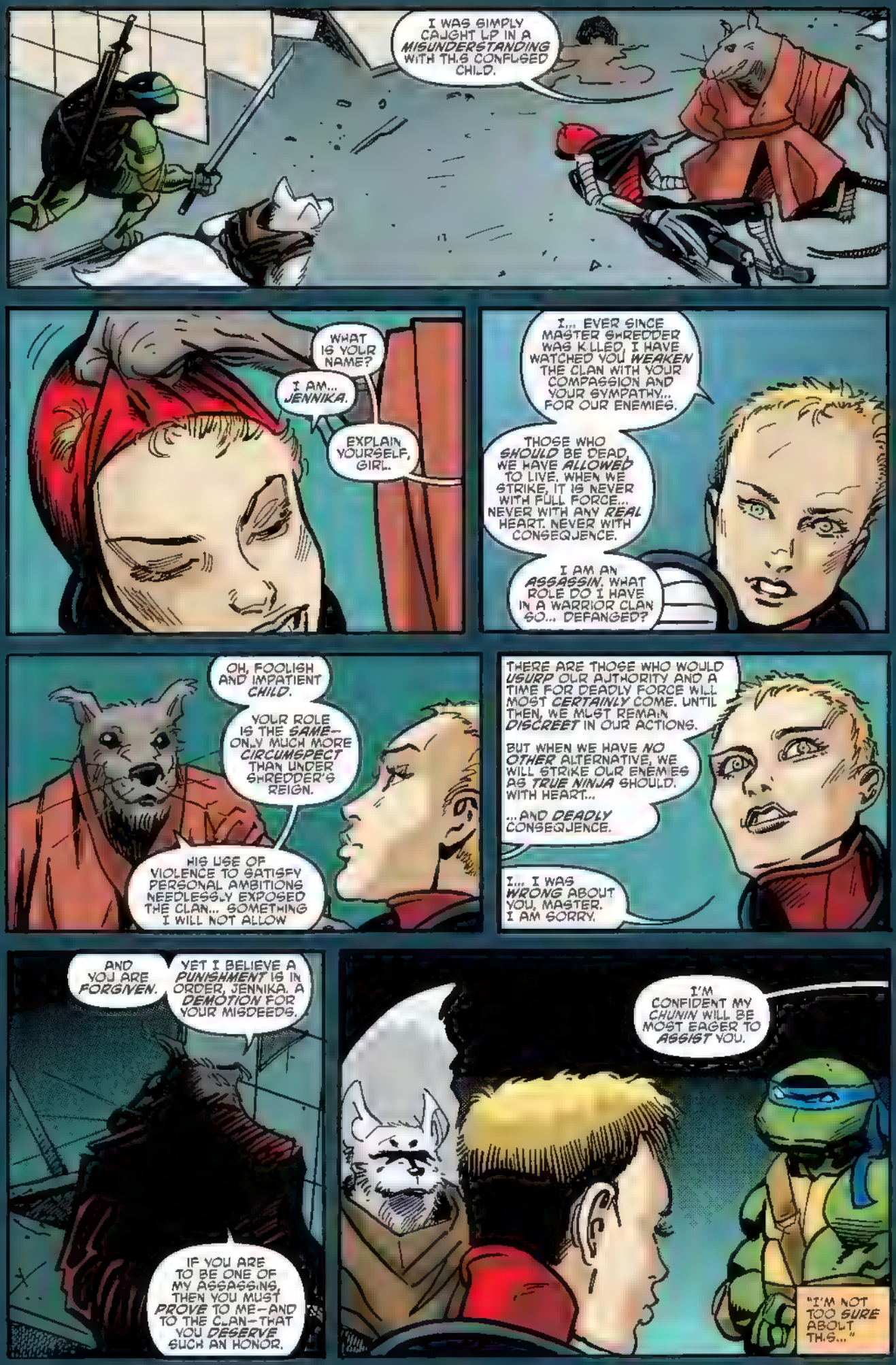
JAMMER, HANDLE THE ELITE!
I'LL KILL THE RAT.
WE SHALL SEE.
YOU GONNA LET HER ORDER YOU AROUND LIKE THAT, JAMMER?
EH, WHO CARES AS LONG AS WE'RE HAVIN' FUN, MAZE?
HNH?
BUT WHAT'S UP WITH ALL THE ASSASSIN TALK?
DUNNO. GUESS WE BETTER SHOW 'EM—WE AIN'T ASSASSINS...
...WE'RE STREET PHANTOMS.
YAAGH!

WHAT THE—
FATHER?
IT CAME FROM H S CHAMBERS!
C'MON! WE—
NUH-UH, GREENIE...
...YOUR BOSS NEEDS A LITTLE PRIVACY AT THE MOMENT.
YEAH. DO NOT DISTURB.
OUT OF OUR WAY!
SURE. NO PROBLEM.
SWIP
BUT YOU STILL AIN'T GOIN' IN THERE.
GAHH!
KRAK
NNF!

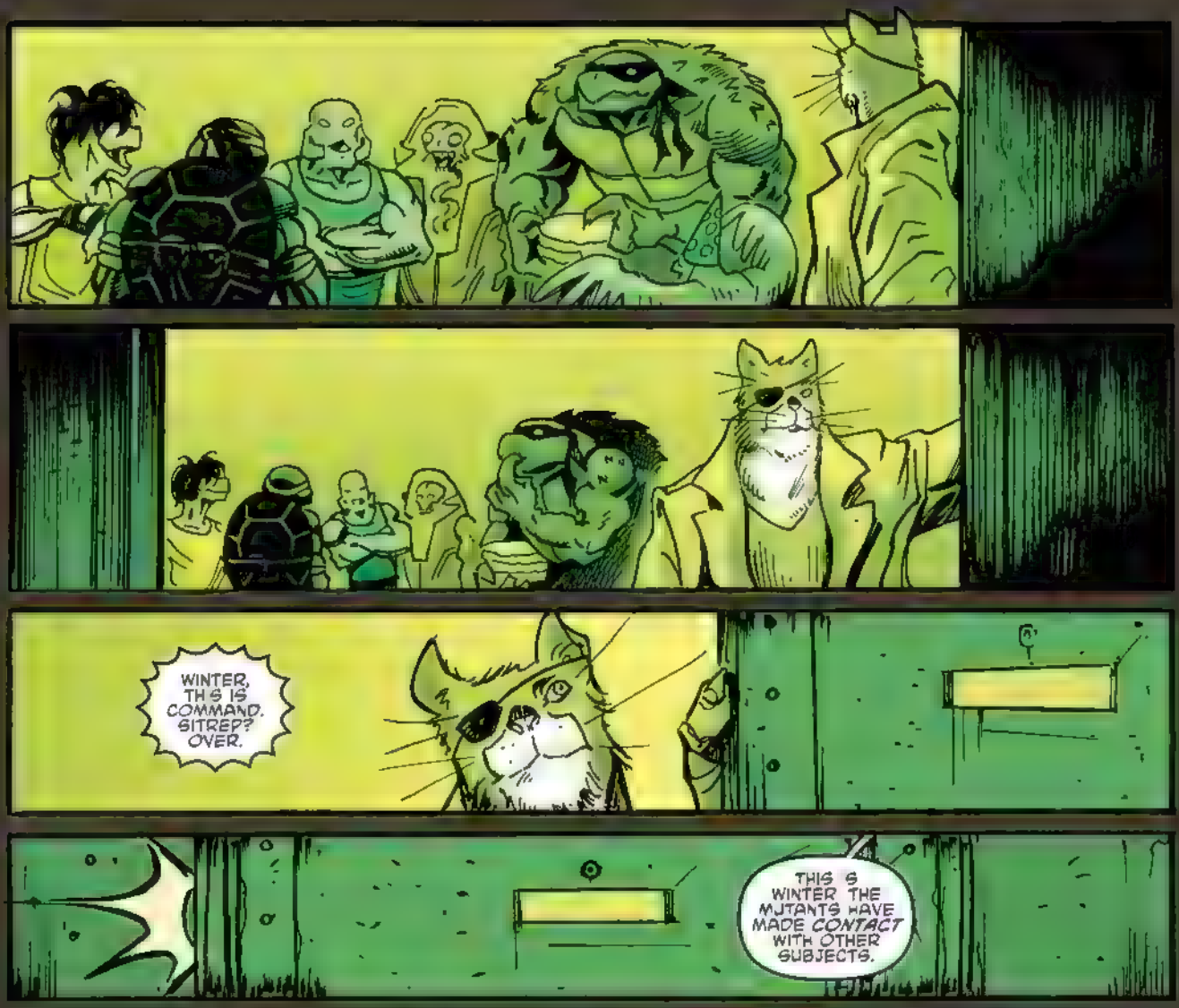
YOU DIE TODAY!
DO I?
AND WHY IS THAT, CHILD?
YOUR COWARDICE BRINGS SHAME TO THE FOOT CLAN.
CHAK
WE ARE NINJA.
RUTHLESS AND REMORSELESS
WE DO NOT DEAL IN MERCY.
WE DEAL IN DEATH!
POK
INDEED
GYAH!
YOU FORGET, HOWEVER.
KRSH
IT IS ONLY THROUGH A DEATH DEALT THAT I STAND HERE TODAY AS YOUR MASTER
YOU ARE NOT... MY MASTER
AH, BUT BY ANCIENT RITES, I AM
YOUR SWORN MASTER
AND THOUGH YOU MISTAKENLY BELIEVED OTHERWISE, AS A NINJA WARRIOR...
YOUR SUPERIOR
"WE'VE GOT TO GET TO MASTER SPLINTER BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!"

NO TELLING WHAT HE'S UP AGAINST IN THERE!
YEAH- BUT WHAT ABOUT OUT HERE?
I STILL CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST!
CHOK
NO, LITTLE FOX? WELL, I'LL TELL YA.
KZANK
YOU'RE UP AGAINST THE NEW POWER IN TOWN, THAT'S WHAT.
YEAH. YOU FOOT FREAKS HAD YOUR DAY.
BUT THE PHANTOMS RULE NOW.
OKAY... ERF... THIS ISN'T WORKING.
NO... NOT WHILE THEY HAVE THOSE CLOAKS.
WE'VE GOTTA CHANGE THINGS UP.
TURN A DISADVANTAGE INTO AN ADVANTAGE?
EXACTLY...

"... FOLLOW MY LEAD"
ALL RIGHT, ENOUGH. LET'S SETTLE THIS LIKE MEN. HAND-TO-HAND.
LIKE MEN? HEH.
SURE...
...YOUR FUNERAL.
NOW, ALOPEX!
HYAH!
SKHIP
WHA?!
KE-RACK
WHO RULES NOW?
OH, MAN— JAMMER AND MAZE ARE DOWN!
LET'S GET THE HELL OUTTA HERE!
GET THEM!
NO, LET THEM GO. WE NEED TO PROTECT THE MASTER
I AM FINE, LEONARDO.


I WAS SIMPLY CAUGHT UP IN A MISUNDERSTANDING WITH THIS CONFUSED CHILD.
WHAT IS YOUR NAME?
I AM... JENNIKA.
EXPLAIN YOURSELF, GIRL.
I... EVER SINCE MASTER SHREDDER WAS KILLED, I HAVE WATCHED YOU WEAKEN THE CLAN WITH YOUR COMPASSION AND YOUR SYMPATHY... FOR OUR ENEMIES.
THOSE WHO SHOULD BE DEAD, WE HAVE ALLOWED TO LIVE. WHEN WE STRIKE, IT IS NEVER WITH FULL FORCE... NEVER WITH ANY REAL HEART. NEVER WITH CONSEQUENCE.
I AM AN ASSASSIN. WHAT ROLE DO I HAVE IN A WARRIOR CLAN SO... DEFANGED?
OH, FOOLISH AND IMPATIENT CHILD.
YOUR ROLE IS THE SAME— ONLY MUCH MORE CIRCUMSPECT THAN UNDER SHREDDER'S REIGN.
HIS USE OF VIOLENCE TO SATISFY PERSONAL AMBITIONS NEEDLESSLY EXPOSED THE CLAN... SOMETHING I WILL NOT ALLOW
THERE ARE THOSE WHO WOULD USURP OUR AUTHORITY AND A TIME FOR DEADLY FORCE WILL MOST CERTAINLY COME. UNTIL THEN, WE MUST REMAIN DISCREET IN OUR ACTIONS.
BUT WHEN WE HAVE NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE, WE WILL STRIKE OUR ENEMIES AS TRUE NINJA SHOULD. WITH HEART...
...AND DEADLY CONSEQUENCE.
I... I WAS WRONG ABOUT YOU, MASTER. I AM SORRY.
AND YOU ARE FORGIVEN.
YET I BELIEVE A PUNISHMENT IS IN ORDER, JENNIKA. A DEMOTION FOR YOUR MISDEEDS.
IF YOU ARE TO BE ONE OF MY ASSASSINS, THEN YOU MUST PROVE TO ME—AND TO THE CLAN—THAT YOU DESERVE SUCH AN HONOR.
I'M CONFIDENT MY CHUNIN WILL BE MOST EAGER TO ASSIST YOU.
"I'M NOT TOO SURE ABOUT THIS..."

...I MEAN, COMIN' WITH YOU AND A... NO OFFENSE, MONDO.
YO, NONE TAKEN, DUDE.
IT'S JUST—I KNOW IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO NOT JOIN'N THE FOOT WITH MY FAMILY AND STUFF, BUT HANGIN' OUT WITH OLD HOB...
...I DUNNO. SEEMS KINDA WRONG, TOO.
LOOK, MAN, I GET THAT HOB CAN BE AN ACQUIRED TASTE SOMETIMES, BUT HE AIN'T THE ONLY ONE HERE.
IT'S MUTANIMALS, REMEMBER? NOT MUTANIMA...
YEAH—I KNOW. IT'LL BE GOOD TO SEE SOME FAMILIAR FACES, I GUESS.
NO GUESSIN' ABOUT IT, DUDE...
...YOU'LL SEE.
SURPRISE!
WELCOM MIKY!
WHOA.


WINTER, THIS IS COMMAND. SITREP? OVER.
THIS IS WINTER. THE MUTANTS HAVE MADE *CONTACT* WITH OTHER SUBJECTS.

ORDERS? OVER.
CONTINUE RECON. STAND BY FOR *FURTHER* ORDERS. OVER.
ROGER THAT...

...STANDING BY.
DARKWATER

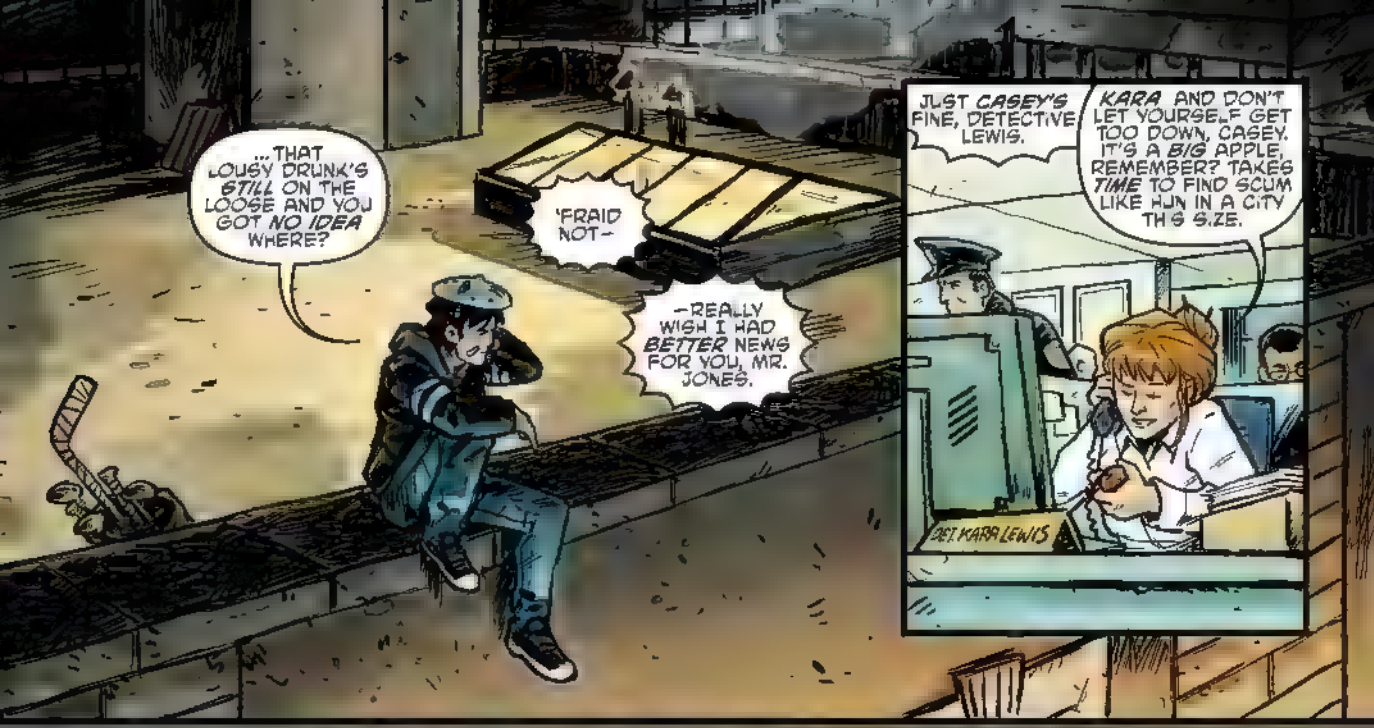
ART BY KEVIN EASTMAN

WELCOM MIKY!
YOU GUYS TOTALLY MADE ME A CAKE!
THAT'S SO... COOL.
THANKS, EVERYONE.
ACTUALLY, ALL CREDIT GOES TO PIGEON PETE HERE.
HIS IDEA AND HIS HANDIWORK.
KISS
HI! I'M PETE!
KISS
WORD OF ADVICE— LOOK, BUT DON'T EAT.
PETE'S NOT EXACTLY WHAT YOU'D CALL CULINARILY SOPHISTICATED. HE THINKS GIVING FOLKS WORMS IS A GOOD THING

I'M SALLY PRIDE, BY THE WAY. GREAT TO FINALLY MEET YOU, MIKEY.
NICE TO MEET YOU, TOO, SALLY.
AND, FOR THE REST OF OUR MIGHTY MUTANIMAL CREW, WE'VE GOT...
MAN RAY.
A PLEASURE.
SEYMOUR GUTZ, A.K.A. MUTAGEN MAN.
H-HI.
HERMAN THE HERMIT CRAB.
AN HONOR TO HAVE YOU WITH US AGAIN, SIR!
MONDO GECKO.
DUDE.
LINDSEY BAKER, OUR TOKEN HUMAN.
VERY FUNNY, SALLY.
AND—
HI!
I'M PETE!
KISS THE COOK

OKAY, PETE—DON'T YOU HAVE SOME GRASSHOPPER GOULASH COOKING IN THE KITCHEN?
WHY? DO YOU SMELL SOMETH'N' BURNIN'?
AND, OF COURSE, YOUR BOSOM BUDDY SLASH.
SLASH HAS TOLD US QUITE A BIT ABOUT YOU, MIKEY, THAT'S FOR SURE.
MOSTLY GOOD STUFF, I HOPE.
MIKEY, I WOULD NEVER SAY ANYTH'NG BAD ABOUT YOU.
I'M JUST KIDDIN', B'G GUY. IT'S TOTALLY GREAT TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
SAME HERE, MY FRIEND. IT'S BEEN TOO LONG.
DAMN RIGHT, IT HAS...
...I WAS STARTIN' TO THINK I M GHT'VE SEEN THE LAST OF YOU GREENIES, WHAT WITH ALL THE SCUTTLEBUTT ABOUT A BIG THROW-DOWN BETWEEN YOUR OLD MAN AND THE SHREDDER.
OH... HEY, HOB. HOW ARE YOU?
I STILL GOT MY HEAD... AND SO DO YOU, WHICH MEANS WE'RE BOTH DOIN' BETTER THAN SOME OTHER FOLKS WE KNOW, HEY?
I... GUESS.
LISTEN, GANG—I'M GONNA TALK IN PRIVATE WITH OUR NINJA PAL HERE FOR A FEW. DON'T EAT ALL THE CAKE BEFORE WE GET BACK, ALL RIGHT?
YES, WELL...
...I DON'T THINK THAT'LL BE A PROBLEM.

YO, CHEF BOY-BIRDY, HIT THE ROAD. WE NEED SOME PRIVACY.
SURE THING, BOSS. TH S NEEDS ANOTHER TEN M NUTES 'TILL IT'S PERFECT, ANYWAYS. SOME OF THE R LITTLE ANTENNAS AREN'T EVEN CRISPY YET.
YEESH.
I GUESS WHAT DON'T KILL US MAKES US STRONGER.
ANYWAY, I WANTED TO TELL YOU HOW GLAD I AM TO HAVE YOU HERE W TH US, KID.
HAVIN' YOU ON BOARD IS GONNA MAKE THE MIGHTY MUTANIMALS EVEN MIGHTIER.
YEAH, WELL, I HAVEN'T REALLY SAID I WAS JOININ' UP, HOB.
BUT A NICE GUY LIKE YOU DOESN'T STRIKE ME AS FOOT CLAN MATERIAL--ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU GOT THE CHOICE TO WORK W TH A CREW THAT'S GOT NOTHIN' BUT HERO-ING ON THEIR AGENDA.
MY GUT'S TELLIN' ME WE'RE A BETTER FIT FOR YOU THAN THAT PSYCHO CREW SPLINTER'S IN CHARGE OF NOW.
THEY'RE NOT ALL PSYCHOS.
I'M SORRY-- WHAT?
I SAID, YOU'RE WRONG ABOUT THE FOOT CLAN ALL BEIN' PSYCHOS.
YEAH? THEN WHY'RE YOU HERE AND NOT THERE, HUH?
I GOT MY REASONS, NOT THAT IT'S ANY OF YOUR BUSINESS.
BUT JUST 'CAUSE I'M HERE DOESN'T MEAN I TH NK MY FAMILY AREN'T STILL GOOD GUYS...
...EVEN IF THEY ARE IN THE FOOT NOW.
NOW, IF IT'S COOL WITH YOJ, I'M GONNA GO HAVE SOME WORM CAKE WITH MY FR ENDS.
SLAM
"SO, BASICALLY YER SAYIN' NOTHIN'S CHANGED..."


...THAT LOUSY DRUNK'S STILL ON THE LOOSE AND YOU GOT NO IDEA WHERE?
'FRAID NOT—
—REALLY WISH I HAD BETTER NEWS FOR YOU, MR. JONES.
JUST CASEY'S FINE, DETECTIVE LEWIS.
KARA AND DON'T LET YOURSELF GET TOO DOWN, CASEY. IT'S A BIG APPLE, REMEMBER? TAKES TIME TO FIND SCUM LIKE HUN IN A CITY TH S S.ZE.
DET. KARA LEWIS

BUT I'M ON THE HOOK FOR HIS ESCAPE, SO I'M NOT GONNA QUIT UNTIL I'VE GOT THAT BASTARD BACK IN CUSTODY.
I PROMISE YOU'LL BE THE FIRST TO KNOW WHEN I DO.
THANKS.
THERE IS ONE THING, THOUGH...

...THE MAYOR'S HOT FOR US TO KEEP THIS UNDER WRAPS 'CAUSE OF THE WHOLE "MUTANT ISSUE" THAT'S ATTACHED TO IT—ISSUED A GAG ORDER ON US AND THE PRESS... THE WORKS.
GUESS HE DOESN'T WANT A CITYWIDE PANIC OR SOMETHING.

T COMPLICATES THINGS A JITTLE, BUT I DOUBT IT'LL LAST LONG—NOT IN THE AGE OF TWITS AND TWEETS.
HEH. YER PROBABLY RIGHT.
THANKS FOR THE INFO DETEC... ER, KARA.
ANY T.ME.

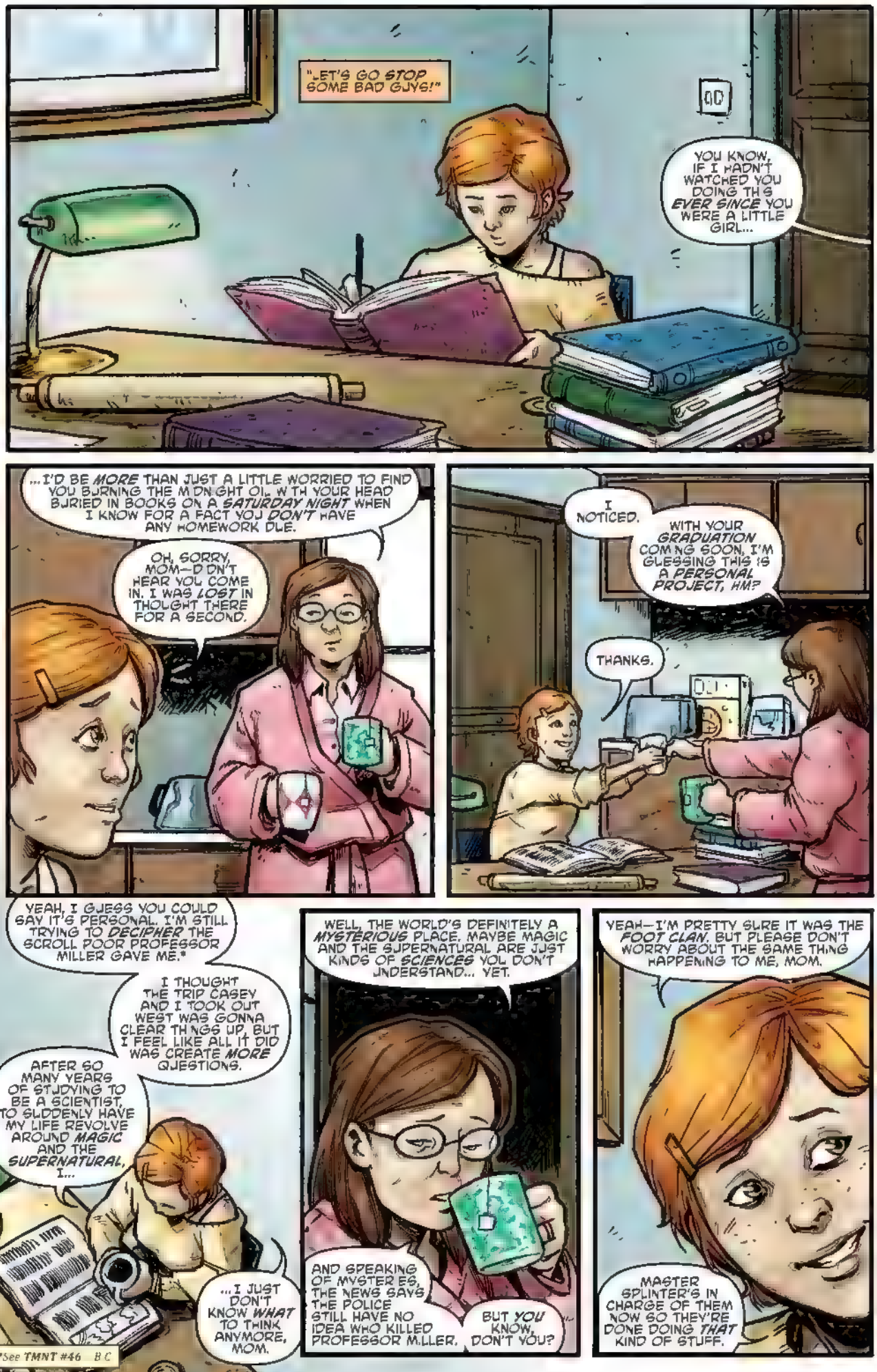
DAMN.
YO, WHO'S KARA...

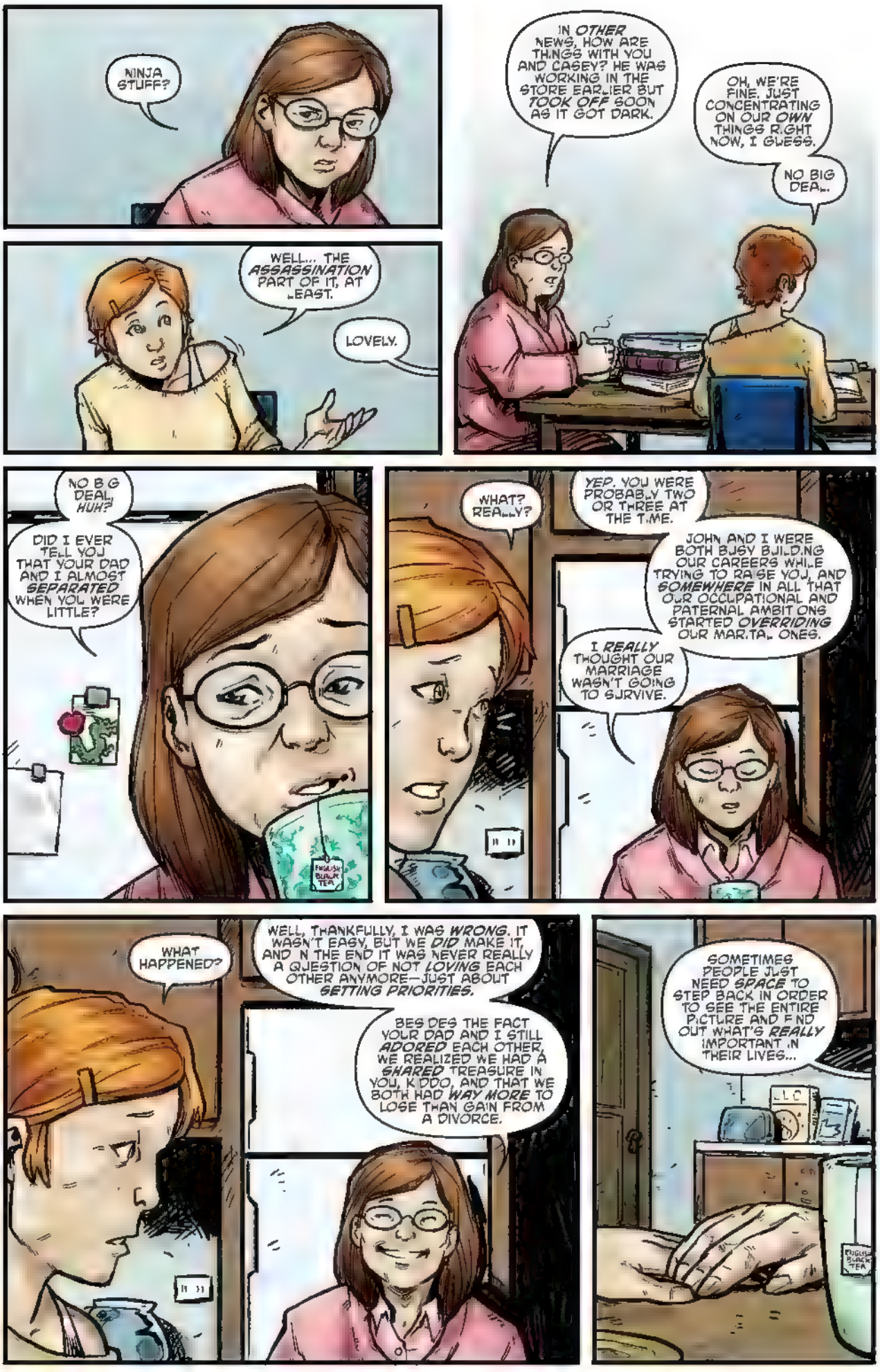
...AND DOES APRIL KNOW YOU'RE UP HERE TALK'N' TO HER ON THE PHONE?
OH. HEY, RAPH.
KARA'S JUST A COP WHO'S LOOKIN' FOR MY DAD. IT'S NOTHIN'.
ANY GOOD NEWS?
NOPE. COPS DON'T GOT A LINE ON HIM YET.
WELL, DON'T SWEAT IT—THUGS LIKE HIM CAN STAY OUTTA TROUBLE ONLY FOR SO LONG, YOU KNOW? IT'S IN THE R D.N.A. OR SOMETHIN'.
SAYS THE GUY WHOSE OLD MAN'S TRYIN' TO TURN A BUNCHA NINJA KILLERS INTO SAINTS.
YOU GOT A POINT THERE, AIN'T GONNA LIE.
ANYWAYS, THAT ALL YOU'RE DOIN' UP HERE BY YOURSELF, BRO?
GETT'N' BAD NEWS FROM THE COPS?
NAH. I WAS LOOKIN' AT THE STARS, TOO.
REALLY? ALL I SEE IS MOSTLY SMOG AND PLANES.
YEAH. ME, TOO.
MAYBE I SHOULD BORROW APRIL'S TELESCOPE NEXT TIME

HOW *ARE* THINGS GOIN' WITH YOJ AND APRIL, BY THE WAY? I'M SURPRISED YOU AIN'T *HANGIN'* WITH HER TONIGHT.
ME AND APRIL ARE FINE.
WE JUST BEEN DOIN' OUR *OWN THINGS* SINCE WE GOT BACK INTO TOWN.
SHE'S GOT THAT *OLD SCROLL* TO INVESTIGATE AND I'M BUSY HELPIN' AT THE STORE... AND *OTHER* STUFF.
WELL, UNLESS YOU'RE THE WORLD'S *WORST* HAMMERER, I'M GUESS'N THOSE BANDAGES MEAN YOU BEEN DOIN' *MORE* OF THE OTHER STUFF THAN THE STORE STUFF.
YEAH. MAYBE.
WHAT ABOUT *YOU*, MAN? YER A *CARD-CARRYIN'* MEMBER OF THE FOOT CLAN AND EVERYTHING NOW.
YEAH, YEAH, I KNOW— IT'S FREAK'N' NUTSO. COULD BE *WORSE*, THOUGH.
I MEAN, I AIN'T EXACTLY JUMPIN' FOR JOY 'BOUT THE WHOLE THING, BUT IF *SOMEONE'S* GOTTA HAVE ALL THAT POWER, I'M GLAD IT'S *MASTER SPLINTER* AT LEAST.
MIKEY'S WHAT'S GOT ME *REALLY* WORRIED THESE DAYS.
HE WASN'T DOWN WITH THE FOOT THING AND DECIDED TO *TAKE OFF* ON SOME LONER QUEST JUST LIKE YOU—TRYIN' TO FIGHT CRIME LIKE ONE OF THOSE *VIGILANTE GUYS* FROM HIS COMIC BOOKS.
IT'S JUST... THE KID'S *TOUGH* AND ALL AND I RESPECT THAT HE'S GOTTA DO HIS *OWN* THING RIGHT NOW, BUT, MAN, IT REALLY BOTHERS ME THAT HE'S NOT *WITH* US.

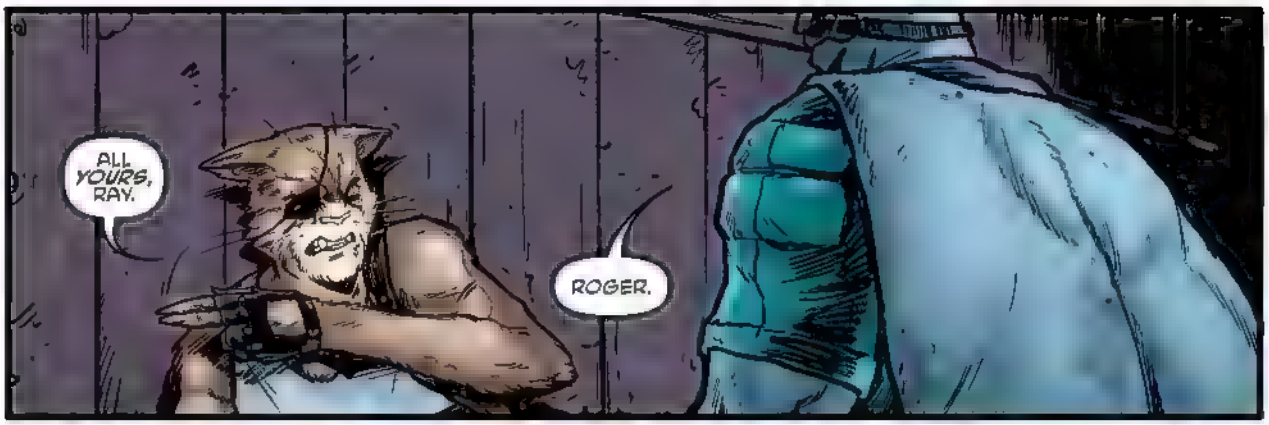
"WHO KNOWS WHAT KINDA DANGER HE'S GONNA RUN INTO OUT THERE BY HIMSELF?"
YOU ARE HISTORY, MICHELANGELO!
AND I WIN AGAIN! WOO HOO!
DUDE, I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! THAT'S LIKE THE SEVENTH GAME IN A ROW YOU'VE BEATEN ME.
GET USED TO IT, K'D— PETE'S BEEN UNDEFEATED THE WHOLE TIME I'VE KNOWN HIM.
IT'S CERTAINLY AN ODDITY. FOR ALL HIS... AHEM... QUIRKS, PIGEON PETE HAS REMARKABLE BOARD GAME SKILLS.
NO JOKE. PETE GETS LOST GO'N' FROM THE BATHROOM TO THE KITCHEN SOMETIMES, BUT THE DUDE NEVER LOSES AT CHECKERS.
OUR SCIENTIST FRIEND HYPOTHESIZES THAT IT'S AN ANOMALY IN HIS MUTATED BRAIN STRUCTURE.
DID I SAY ANOMALY?
I AM THE CHAMPION, MY FRIENDSSSS...
ANNOYING IS MORE ACCURATE.

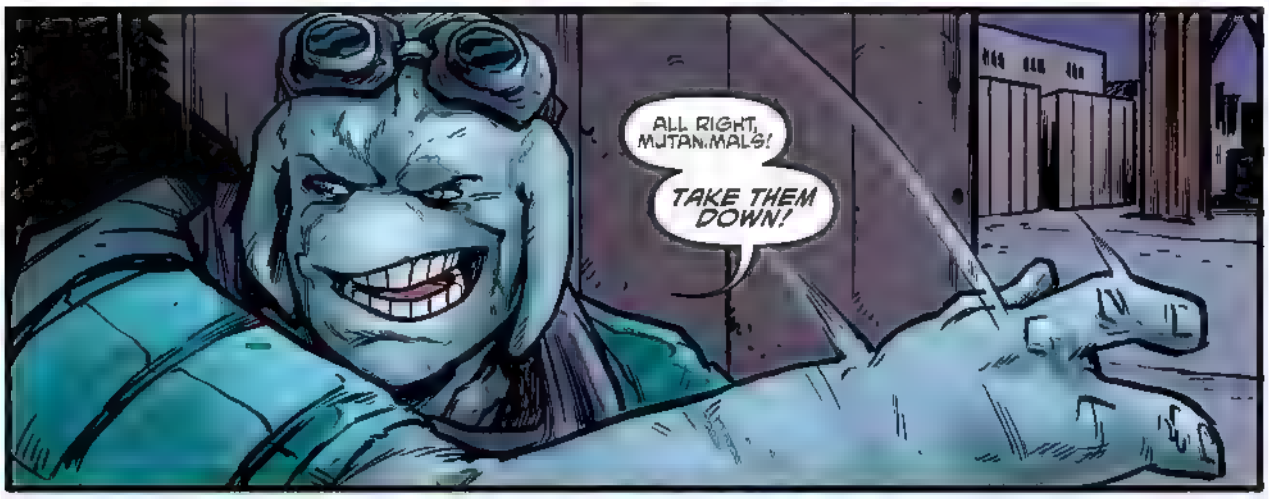
HEY, JUST GIVES ME SOMETHIN' TO SHOOT FOR.
C'MON, PETE—LET'S DO THIS AGAIN. YOU'RE GOIN' DOWN THIS TIME.
SORRY... DETHRONING PIGEON PETE'S GONNA HAFTA WAIT—
—WORD'S COME DOWN THAT THERE'S A BIG ARMS SHIPMENT BEIN' MOVED THROUGH THE DOCKS TONIGHT AND THE MIGHTY MUTANIMALS ARE GONNA MAKE SURE IT DON'T MOVE FAR.
REALLY?
HE'S SERIOUS?
YES, MIKEY—WE'RE REAL HEROES. ISN'T IT GREAT?
HELL YES. WHAT'D YOU THINK THIS WAS, KID—A PROFESSIONAL CHECKERS-PLAY N' CHAT CLUB? WE GOT REAL WORK TO DO.
TIME TO TAKE SOME GUNS OFF THE STREETS.
BUT... NOBODY'S GONNA DIE, RIGHT?
C'MON, MIKEY—DO HEROES KILL? NO, THEY STOP BAD GUYS FROM KILLIN'.
GOT THIS PUPPY FROM OUR FRIENDS AT NULL.* THEY PACK A PUNCH, SURE, BUT ONLY TO STUN, PROMISE.
THEN WHAT'RE WE WAITIN' FOR, DUDES AND DUDETTES?
*See TMNT: MUTANIMALS - B C


"LET'S GO STOP SOME BAD GUYS!"
YOU KNOW, IF I HADN'T WATCHED YOU DOING THIS EVER SINCE YOU WERE A LITTLE GIRL...
...I'D BE MORE THAN JUST A LITTLE WORRIED TO FIND YOU BURNING THE MIDNIGHT OIL WITH YOUR HEAD BURIED IN BOOKS ON A SATURDAY NIGHT WHEN I KNOW FOR A FACT YOU DON'T HAVE ANY HOMEWORK DUE.
OH, SORRY, MOM—I DIDN'T HEAR YOU COME IN. I WAS LOST IN THOUGHT THERE FOR A SECOND.
I NOTICED.
WITH YOUR GRADUATION COMING SOON, I'M GUESSING THIS IS A PERSONAL PROJECT, HM?
THANKS.
YEAH, I GUESS YOU COULD SAY IT'S PERSONAL. I'M STILL TRYING TO DECIPHER THE SCROLL POOR PROFESSOR MILLER GAVE ME.*
I THOUGHT THE TRIP CASEY AND I TOOK OUT WEST WAS GONNA CLEAR THINGS UP, BUT I FEEL LIKE ALL IT DID WAS CREATE MORE QUESTIONS.
AFTER SO MANY YEARS OF STUDYING TO BE A SCIENTIST, TO SUDDENLY HAVE MY LIFE REVOLVE AROUND MAGIC AND THE SUPERNATURAL, I...
...I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK ANYMORE, MOM.
*See TMNT #46 B C
WELL, THE WORLD'S DEFINITELY A MYSTERIOUS PLACE. MAYBE MAGIC AND THE SUPERNATURAL ARE JUST KINDS OF SCIENCES YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND... YET.
AND SPEAKING OF MYSTERIES, THE NEWS SAYS THE POLICE STILL HAVE NO IDEA WHO KILLED PROFESSOR MILLER.
BUT YOU KNOW, DON'T YOU?
YEAH—I'M PRETTY SURE IT WAS THE FOOT CLAN. BUT PLEASE DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE SAME THING HAPPENING TO ME, MOM.
MASTER SPLINTER'S IN CHARGE OF THEM NOW SO THEY'RE DONE DOING THAT KIND OF STUFF.


NINJA STUFF?
WELL... THE ASSASSINATION PART OF IT, AT LEAST.
LOVELY.
IN OTHER NEWS, HOW ARE THINGS WITH YOU AND CASEY? HE WAS WORKING IN THE STORE EARLIER BUT TOOK OFF SOON AS IT GOT DARK.
OH, WE'RE FINE. JUST CONCENTRATING ON OUR OWN THINGS RIGHT NOW, I GUESS.
NO BIG DEAL.
NO BIG DEAL HUH?
DID I EVER TELL YOU THAT YOUR DAD AND I ALMOST SEPARATED WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE?
WHAT? REALLY?
YEP. YOU WERE PROBABLY TWO OR THREE AT THE TIME.
JOHN AND I WERE BOTH BUSY BUILDING OUR CAREERS WHILE TRYING TO RAISE YOU, AND SOMEWHERE IN ALL THAT OUR OCCUPATIONAL AND PATERNAL AMBITIONS STARTED OVERRIDING OUR MARITAL ONES.
I REALLY THOUGHT OUR MARRIAGE WASN'T GOING TO SURVIVE.
WHAT HAPPENED?
WELL, THANKFULLY, I WAS WRONG. IT WASN'T EASY, BUT WE DID MAKE IT, AND IN THE END IT WAS NEVER REALLY A QUESTION OF NOT LOVING EACH OTHER ANYMORE—JUST ABOUT SETTING PRIORITIES.
BESIDES THE FACT YOUR DAD AND I STILL ADORED EACH OTHER, WE REALIZED WE HAD A SHARED TREASURE IN YOU, KIDDO, AND THAT WE BOTH HAD WAY MORE TO LOSE THAN GAIN FROM A DIVORCE.
SOMETIMES PEOPLE JUST NEED SPACE TO STEP BACK IN ORDER TO SEE THE ENTIRE PICTURE AND FIND OUT WHAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT IN THEIR LIVES...
ENGLISH BLACK TEA

"...AND FIGURE OUT WHAT THEY SHOULD *REALLY* BE DOING."
MAN, THIS IS SO GREAT DO'N' THE *RIGHT THING* FOR A CHANGE
SPEAKIN' OF DOIN'...
...GET TO IT, MONDO.
GETTIN' TO IT.
RRRRRMMMM
YO, YOU *HEARIN'* THAT?
YEAH? DAT *ROLLERSKATES* OR SOMETHIN'?
RRRRR MMMM
WHAK
HRRF!
PUH-LEASE...
...AS IF.


ALL YOURS, RAY.
ROGER.

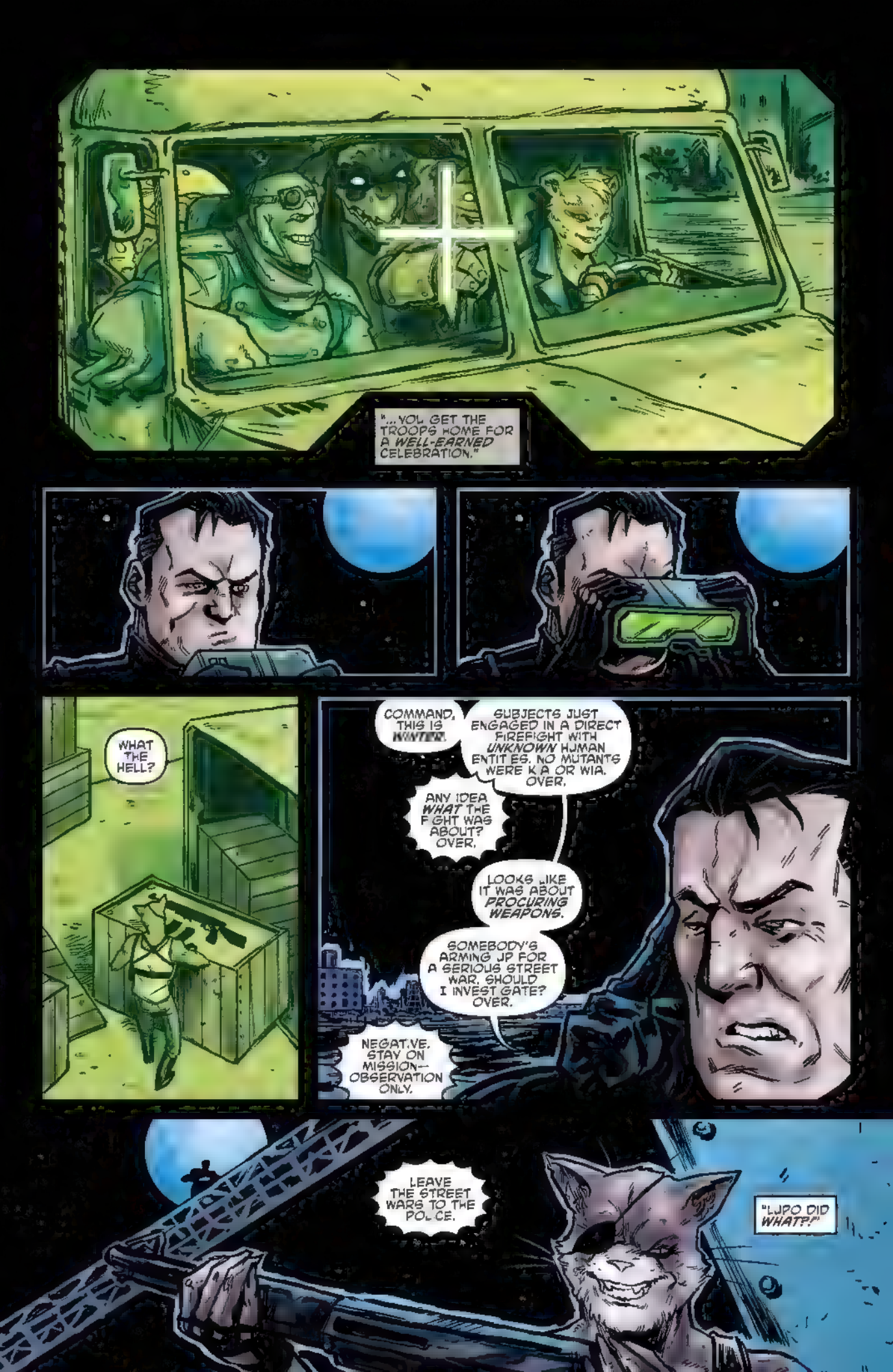

ALL RIGHT, MUTANMALS!
TAKE THEM DOWN!

RAHH!

UH, MR. LUPO...
OH, YOU GOTTA BE FREAKIN' KIDDIN' ME.
MORE STINKIN' MUTANTS BUTTIN' IN WHERE THEY DON'T BELONG?*
*See TMNT #51 B&C
STOP 'EM, BOYS!
BLAM!
HERMAN, LAY DOWN SUPPRESSION FIRE!
10-4!
BRATATT! BRATATT!
LOOK OUT!
ALL RIGHT, WHILE THEY'RE DOWN!
SLASH AND SALLY, LEFT FLANK! MIKEY AND SEYMOUR, TO THE RIGHT!
HERMAN AND I ARE HEADING STRAIGHT UP THE GUT!

GRAHH!
SMASH!
STRIKE ONE!
STRIKE TWO!
AND THREE!
THEY'RE OUT!
YES!
SMAK
IT'S... IT'S AN HONOR TO FIGHT ALONGSIDE YOU, MICHELANGELO. SLASH REALLY HAS TOLD US A LOT OF GOOD THINGS ABOUT YOU.
THAT'S 'CAUSE SLASH IS LIKE MY BROTHER FROM ANOTHER MOTHER!
KWAH!
FWIP!
THAT'S SO NICE. I'VE ALWAYS WANTED A CLOSE FRIEND LIKE THAT BUT... WELL, I'M JUST NOT TOO PLEASANT TO LOOK AT.
KZZZK
WHAT'RE YOU TALKIN' 'BOUT, DUDE? YOU GOT THE MUTANIMALS, DON'T YOU?
BESIDES...
SPAP
...YOU AIN'T SEEN UGLY UNTIL YOU'VE SEEN GENERAL KRANG, TRUST ME.
TH-THANKS, MICHELANGELO.
CALL ME MIKEY, BRO.

BACK OFF!
SOMETHING TELLS ME THAT'S THE CRATE WE'RE LOOKING FOR, HERMAN.
AFFIRMATIVE, SIR!
THEN WHAT SAY WE END THIS LITTLE ENGAGEMENT HERE AND NOW, SOLDIER?
KYXZZT!
I'D CALL THAT MISSION ACCOMPLISHED, MY FRIENDS.
SO WOULD I...
...IN DAMN FINE FASHION, TO BOOT.
NICE WORK, MUTANIMALS.
THIS THE ONE, RAY?
I THINK SO, HOB. YES.
GOOD. I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS...


"...YOU GET THE TROOPS HOME FOR A *WELL-EARNED* CELEBRATION."
WHAT THE HELL?
COMMAND, THIS IS *WINTER*.
SUBJECTS JUST ENGAGED IN A DIRECT FIREFIGHT WITH *UNKNOWN* HUMAN ENTITIES. NO MUTANTS WERE K A OR WIA. OVER.
ANY IDEA *WHAT* THE FIGHT WAS ABOUT? OVER.
LOOKS LIKE IT WAS ABOUT *PROCURING WEAPONS*.
SOMEBODY'S ARMING UP FOR A SERIOUS STREET WAR. SHOULD I INVEST GATE? OVER.
NEGATIVE. STAY ON MISSION—OBSERVATION ONLY.
LEAVE THE STREET WARS TO THE POLICE.
"LJPO DID *WHAT?!*"

PLEASE TELL ME THIS IS YOUR TWISTED IDEA OF A JOKE, JAMMER.
NO, I SWEAR, MR. DUN, IT'S ALL TRUE...
DUN
...WE JUST GOT WORD THAT LUPO AND HIS BOYS GOT TAKEN OUT AT THE DOCKS, AND THE WHOLE SHIPMENT GOT COMPROMISED, TOO.
AND WHOM DO WE HAVE TO THANK FOR THIS... COMPROMISE?
I AIN'T EXACTLY SURE... I DON'T GOT ANY NAMES YET, BUT I HEARD IT WAS A BUNCH OF THEM MUTANT FREAKS.
MUTANTS?
MUTANTS?!
KE-RACK!
FIRST YOU FAIL TO ELIMINATE THAT FOOT RODENT AND LEAVE BEHIND TWO OF MY BLASTED CLOAKS IN THE PROCESS, AND NOW THAT IMBECILE LUPO LOSES MY WEAPONRY TO THOSE ABOMINATIONS!
DO YOU REALIZE HOW MUCH THIS IS COSTING ME?!
BOSS, I—
NO MORE, DO YOU HEAR ME?!
IF THOSE DAMNED NINJAS AND MUTANTS WANT A WAR, THEN I'LL GIVE THEM A WAR LIKE THEY'VE NEVER SEEN. NO MORE HIDING IN THE SHADOWS FOR US, JAMMER...
GET ME THE INVENTOR!

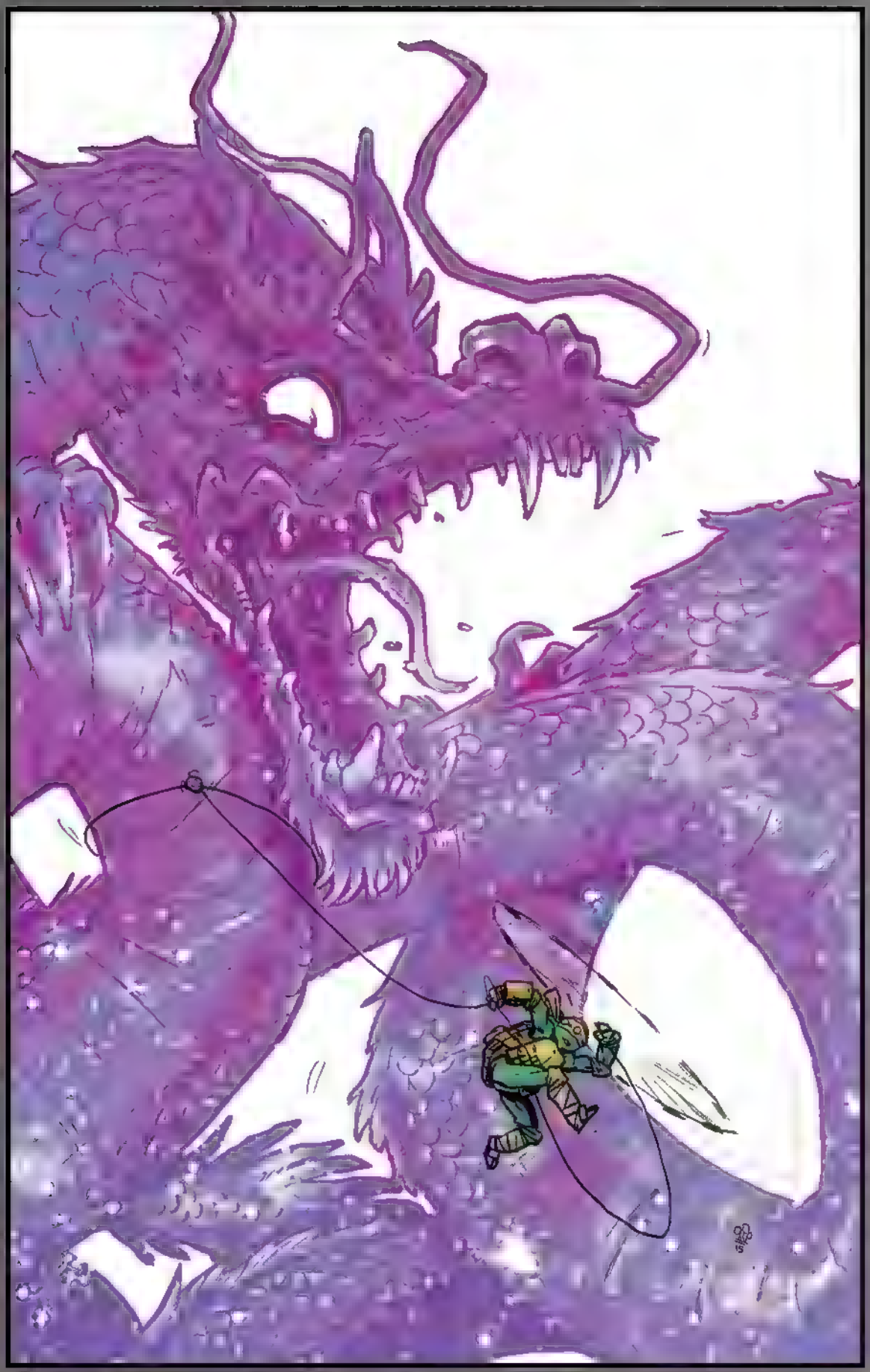
MAN, THE LOOKS ON THOSE SCUMBAGS' FACES WHEN HERMAN BLASTED THEM THE FIRST TIME...
...PRICELESS!
HEH. IT WAS PRETTY INVIGORATING, MA'AM, I WON'T LIE.
AND LET'S NOT FORGET MICHE... ER, MIKEY. HE PERFORMED OUTSTANDINGLY WELL ON HIS FIRST MISSION WITH US.
AH, IT WAS NOTHIN', JUST FOLLOW N' YOUR AWESOME LEAD, PAL.
SPEAK N' OF AWESOME...
CHAIN CHOMP YOMP
...CHECK OUT MY NEWEST MASTERPIECE! WHO'S UP FOR SOME VICTORY PIZZA?
ONE HUNDRED PERCENT INSECT-FREE. I CHECKED.
PIZZA!
KISS TUE
UM... LINDSEY?
OKAY, NINETY-NINE POINT NINE PERCENT.
NOW THIS IS WHAT I DIG SEEIN'...

...MY MIGHTY MUTANIMALS CHOWIN' DOWN AFTER A BIG W-N.
I DON'T KNOW 'BOUT ANYONE ELSE, BUT YOU BUNCH ARE MY HEROES FOR SURE.
COME ON AND JOIN US, BOSS. OL' PETE'S OUTDONE HIMSELF THIS TIME.
NAH, YOU GUYS GO AHEAD. I WAS JUST CHECKIN' TO SEE EVERYONE GOT HOME OKAY, BUT I'VE STILL GOT A FEW THINGS TO TAKE CARE OF DOWN AT THE DOCKS BEFORE MORNING.
LIKE WHAT?
OH, JUST BOSS STUFF. DON'T YOU WORRY YOUR LITTLE TURTLEHEAD ABOUT IT- I'LL BE BACK BEFORE YOU KNOW IT.
HEY, BIG GUY, WHAT EXACTLY DOES HOB DO WITH THE WEAPONS AND STUFF?
I'VE NEVER BEEN WITH HIM AFTER A MISSION, BUT I'M ASSUMING HE DESTROYS THEM- I MEAN, THAT MAKES THE MOST SENSE. WHY?
I DUNNO. JUST SEEMS LIKE SOMETHIN' HE'D LET YOU GUYS BE A PART OF.
WELL, WHATEVER HE DOES, I'M SURE IT'S IN OUR BEST INTERESTS.
OLD HOB CAN BE CRUDE, BUT HE'S A GOOD GUY JUST LIKE US NOW, MIKEY.
'SCUSE ME FOR A SEC.
SURE, MIKEY.

WHAT THE..?

PAT!
OH...
...NO.
EXPLOSIVE
OUR BEST INTERESTS, MY FOOT.

ART BY KEVIN EASTMAN
COLORS BY ROBIN PATTISON



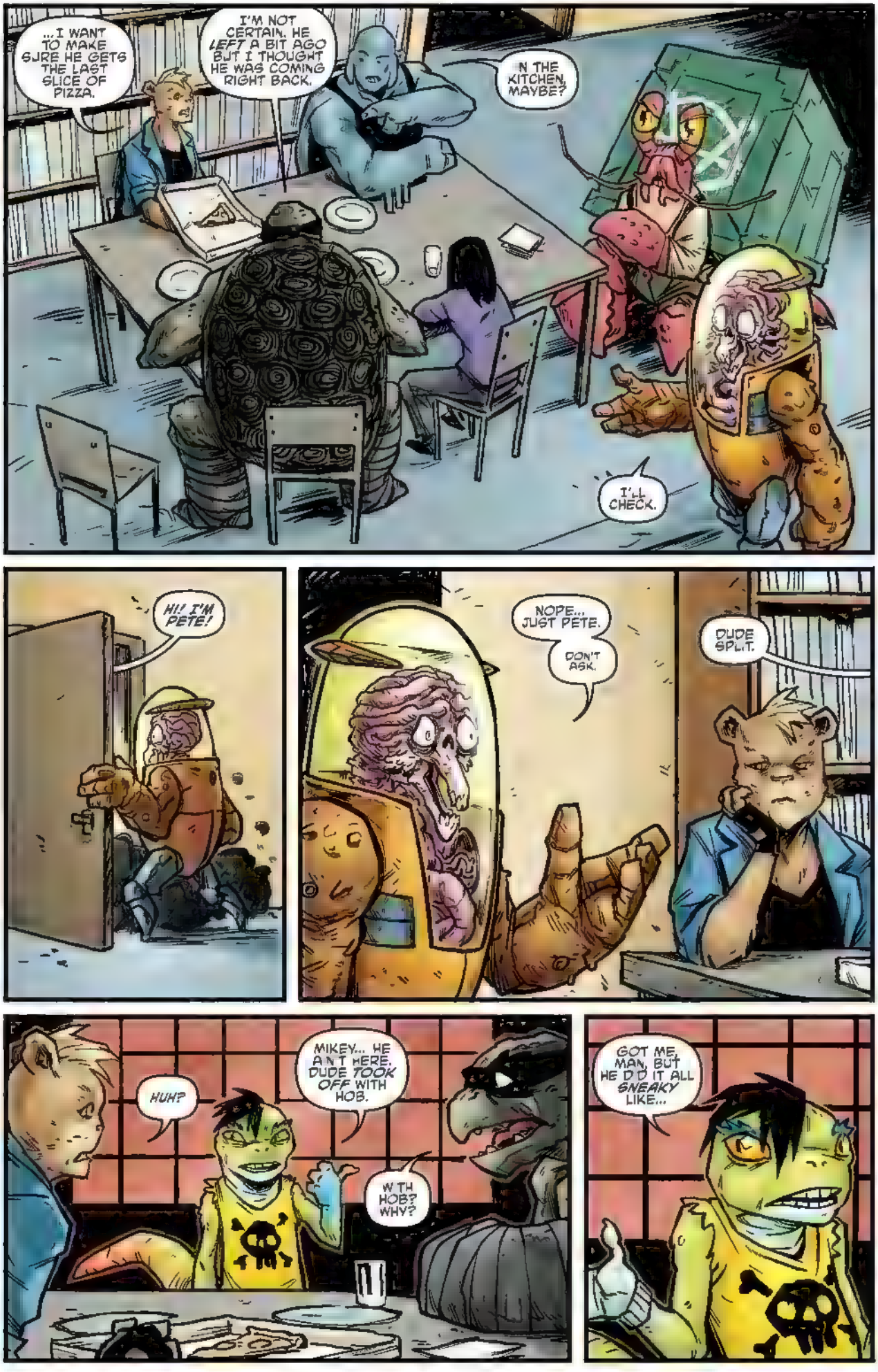
art by MICHAEL DIRLYGAS

ISSUE #54

I KNEW IT WAS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE.
I SWEAR, I'M GONNA STRANGLE MOB WHEN I SEE HIM.
HRRGK!
GYAARGH!
CHOMP
HRFF... HFF... WHO...
HUN!
YOU JUST BIT OFF WAY MORE THAN YOU CAN CHEW, FREAK.

WHATEVER I B T TASTED LIKE TOE FUNGUS, THAT'S FOR SURE.
FWIP!
SHNKK.
YER WAST N' YOUR TIME WITH YOUR LITTLE NINJA TRICKS, RUNT.
WHOA!
WE'RE GONNA DO THIS MY WAY.

EXIT
KRSSH!
WHAT THE—?
HUH, I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* YOU'RE UP TO BACK THERE, BUT YOU BETTER PRAY YOU DON'T...
FWAM!
...BREAK ANYTHING.
OH, HELL.
"HEY, WHERE'S *MIKEY*..."


...I WANT TO MAKE SURE HE GETS THE LAST SLICE OF PIZZA.
I'M NOT CERTAIN. HE *LEFT* A BIT AGO BUT I THOUGHT HE WAS COMING RIGHT BACK.
IN THE KITCHEN, MAYBE?
I'LL CHECK.
HI! I'M PETE!
NOPE... JUST PETE.
DON'T ASK.
DUDE SPLIT.
HUH?
MIKEY... HE AIN'T HERE, DUDE *TOOK OFF* WITH HOB.
WTH HOB? WHY?
GOT ME, MAN, BUT HE D'D IT ALL *SNEAKY* LIKE...

...HOB DIDN'T EVEN *KNOW* HE WAS TAGG'N' ALONG.
I SAW THAT!
SAW WHAT?
M-MA'AM?
OH, QUIT TRYING TO ACT INNOCENT—YOU BOTH *STINK* AT IT.
YOU TWO WERE GOOGLY-EYEING EACH OTHER SOON AS MONDO MENTIONED MIKEY GOING W TH HOB. YOU *KNOW* SOMETHING... SPIT IT OUT.
REALLY, I HAVEN'T THE SLIGHTEST IDEA *WHAT* YOU'RE IMPLYING, SALLY.
HOW ABOUT *YOU*, CRABBY? ANYTHING TO SAY?
I... WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, I *DON'T* REPORT TO YOU, MA'AM.
FINE, THEN...
...I'LL FIND OUT FOR MYSELF.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING, SALLY?
TO THE *DOCKS* TO SEE WHAT MIKEY AND HOB ARE UP TO. YOU'RE WELCOME TO RIDE ALONG IF YOU WANT.

SHOTGUN!
ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THAT, SALLY...
...I MEAN, HOB DIDN'T EXACTLY INVITE US
NO, HE DIDN'T-
-BUT HE DIDN'T NOT INVITE US, EITHER.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A TEAM, RIGHT? A FAMILY.
SO HOB SHOULD BE JUST FINE WITH US SHOWING UP UNEXPECTEDLY.
LET'S GO! AND DON'T FORGET TO ROLL THE WINDOWS DOWN SO LINDSEY CAN HANG HER HEAD OUT.
YOU'RE SO HILARIOUS, SALLY.
THIS IS NOT GOOD.
HEY, GUYS!
SIR, NO, SIR.
HAS ANYONE SEEN THE FIRE EXTINGUISHER?
GUYS?
"SUBJECTS ARE ON THE MOVE..."
...SHOULD I TRAIL THEM? OVER.
NEGATIVE. WE'VE GOT THE INTEL WE NEED FROM YOU. RETURN TO BASE FOR NEXT PHASE OF THE OP. OVER.
ROGER THAT, COMMAND. WINTER OUT.
"YOU JUST NEVER KNOW WHO'S SNEAKIN' AROUND..."

...'SPECIALLY IN A TOWN FILLED WITH SO MANY NINJAS.
BACK OFF, HUN, DAMMIT.
ONLY ONES SNEAKY HERE ARE YOU TWO JERKS.
NOW AIN'T THE TIME FOR THIS CRAP.
OH, IT'S TIME, ALL RIGHT, CAT.
AFTER ALL THESE GREEN CHUMPS STOLE FROM ME...
SMAK!
HRFF!
...IT'S WAY PAST TIME!

RRRF!
SORRY, HUN.
BUT THE ONLY T ME THAT'S PAST..
SMASH!
S PUTTING YOU ON A SHELF.
OR UNDER IT
HEH.
NRRK!
ALWAYS THE FUNNY GUY, AINTCHA?
HNGGR...
FWAM!
ALWAYS CRACKIN' JOKES

KRAK!
WELL, THE JOKE'S ON YOU, FREAK.
WHAP!
WHOULF!
'CAUSE ALL YOUR FUNNY BUSINESS ENDS TODAY.

HNF!
FIRST I'M GONNA FINISH YOU.
FWAM!
AAHH!
SMAK!
THEN I'M GONNA FIN SH YOUR DAMN BROTHERS.
ERRGAHH...
THEN I'M GONNA CRUSH THAT FILTHY RAT YOU CALL DADDY.
AND THEN OL' HLN'S GONNA HAVE THE LAST FREAKIN' LAUGH.

WRONG, HUN— YOU WON'T BE LAUGHING ANY TIME SOON...
...I GUARANTEE IT.
GYAHH!
CRA
BASTARD...
...I'M GONNA WASTE YOU, TOO!
KRICK

FWAPP!
YOU DAMN TURTLES!
CRNCH
ALWAYS ST*CKIN' YOUR NOSES WHERE THEY DON'T BELONG.
THUD!
WELL, THAT'S OVER, YA HEAR?!
OVER!
NO, HUN...
HRRK!
SLASH JUST STARTING!

OKAY, THIS IS NOT WHAT I WAS EXPECTING.
SEYMOUR, MONDO, CHECK ON MIKEY... RAY AND HERMAN, TAKE CARE OF HOB... ME AND LINDSEY WILL TRY TO CALM SLASH DOWN.
YOU COPACETIC, DUDE?
YEAH... I'M OKAY. THANKS.
WE... BY THE LOOK IN SLASH'S EYES...
...I DON'T THINK THAT OTHER MAN WILL BE FOR LONG.
OH, MY ACHIN' SKULL.
YOU NEED TO GET UP, OLD HOB. WE HAVE TROUBLE.
WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST CLUE, SHERLOCK?!
IT'S SLASH— HE'S SEEN HUN.
"SEEN" IS A GROSS UNDERSTATEMENT, SOLDIER.
C'MON! WE GOTTA STOP HIM!
"WE?"
SLASH?!

PUT HIM DOWN, SLASH!
LISTEN TO HER, SLASH. THIS ISN'T LIKE THE OLD STOCKGEN LABS—YOU'RE BETTER THAN THIS NOW!
HI
YES! SLASH GOOD GUY!
CRASH!
BUT HUN BAD.
BAD DRAGON MAN.
SLASH KILL DRAGON.
NO, SLASH! STOP!
HUN'S WORKIN' FOR JS.
WHAT...
...WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

IT'S TRUE, BIG GUY. I CAUGHT 'EM BOTH SLINKIN' AROUND HERE, TOTALLY THICK LIKE THIEVES.
IT WASN'T LIKE THAT, TURTLE, AND YOU KNOW IT.
THEN HOW WAS IT, HOB?
'CAUSE IT'S NOT LOOKING SO GOOD FROM HERE, GOTTA BE HONEST. I THOUGHT YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE DESTROYING ALL THIS STUFF—NOT SAVING IT FOR A RAINY DAY.
YEAH, BRO.
I'M SO CONFUSED
I CAN EXPLAIN.
YES. PLEASE DO EXPLAIN WHY YOU'RE WORKING WITH THAT VILLAIN.
LOOK, I GOT NO DELUSIONS ABOUT HUN—GUY'S THE WORST KINDA SCUMBAG. BUT HE'S ALSO THE KINDA SCUMBAG WE NEED RIGHT NOW.
DON'T GET ME WRONG—WE'RE A DAMN GOOD TEAM, BUT EVENTUALLY WE'RE GONNA BUMP HEADS WITH NULL OR STOCKMAN OR EVEN THE COPS, AND WE'RE GONNA NEED MORE THAN JUST A GOOD TEAM TO COME OUT ON TOP. WE'RE GONNA NEED POWER—REAL POWER WE GOTTA START AMASSIN' NOW...
...THE KINDA POWER THAT ONLY COMES FROM OTHER SCUMBAG HUMANS JUST LIKE HUN.
THINK ABOUT IT, WE STEAL FROM THE BAD GUYS THEN WE KEEP WHAT WE NEED AND THE REST WE USE HUN TO SELL BACK FOR A PROFIT 'CAUSE THEY'LL NEVER DEAL DIRECTLY WITH US. BUT ANOTHER HUMAN?
BIRDS OF A FEATHER, AM I RIGHT?

NO, YOU'RE WRONG!
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE HEROES, HOB—WE SHOULD BE STOPPIN' THUGS LIKE HUN, NOT WORKIN' WITH THEM.
WOW... THOSE'RE HIGH-AND-MIGHTY WORDS COMIN' FROM SOMEONE WHOSE FAMILY'S RUNNIN' THE BIGGEST CRIME OUTFIT IN TOWN.
'SIDES, THIS AIN'T ABOUT WORKIN' WITH THE HUMANS— IT'S ABOUT USIN' 'EM FOR OUR PURPOSES, WHICH, IF YOU FORGOT, IS KEEPIN' MUTANTS SAFE FROM TORTURE AND EXPERIMENTATION.
WAY I SEE IT, IF DOIN' DIRTY BUSINESS WITH CHUMPS LIKE HUN'S GONNA STOP ANOTHER MUTANT FROM GOIN' THROUGH WHAT POOR SEYMOUR OVER THERE HAD TO, THEN THAT'S THE BUSINESS WE'RE GONNA BE IN.
NO WAY. TWO WRONGS DON'T MAKE A RIGHT, DUDE, AND I DON'T LIKE IT.
WELL... LITTLE TURTLE, NOBODY'S STOPPIN' YOU FROM LEAVIN', ARE THEY?
AND WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF US, HOB...
...WHAT IF WE DON'T LIKE IT? ARE WE FREE TO GO, TOO?
YEAH, PAL, YOU ARE. WE'VE ALL BEEN STUCK IN CAGES BEFORE, BUT THIS AIN'T ONE OF 'EM. I'D NEVER DENY FREEDOM TO ANY OF YOU. EVER.
OTHERWISE, WHAT'S THE POINT OF THIS WAR?
I APPRECIATE THAT, HOB— AND PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE TRULY MY FRIEND.

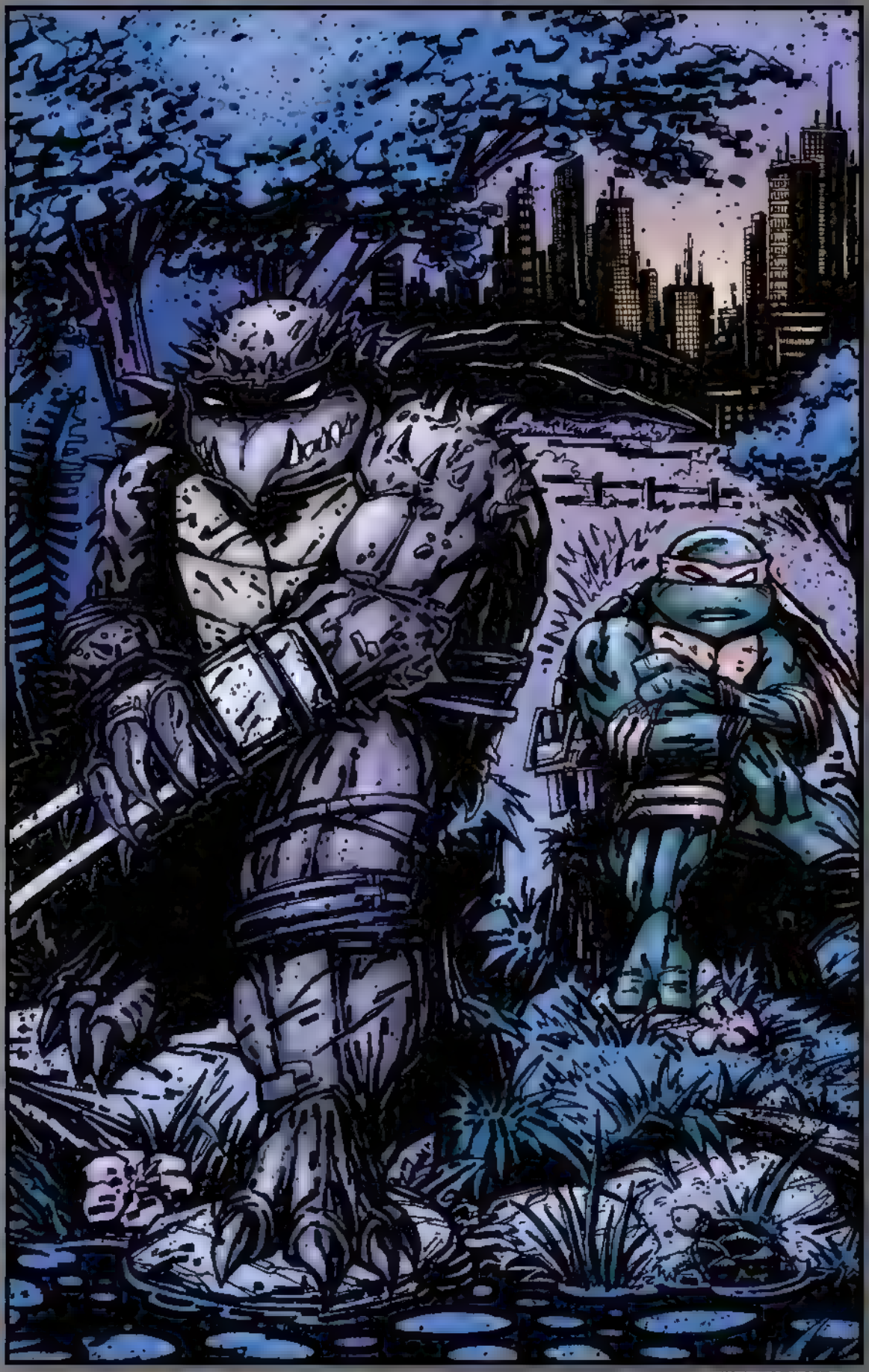
BUT MIKEY IS RIGHT—THE POINT OF ALL THIS WAS TO DO GOOD. TO *BE* GOOD.
AND HUN, WHATEVER HIS PURPOSE, IS *NOT* GOOD.
DAMMIT, SLASH, WHY'RE YOU LETTIN' THAT NINJA CHUMP GET INTO YOUR HEAD LIKE THIS? A... TH S TALK ABOUT HEROES AND BAD GUYS, LIKE THE WORLD'S *SIMPLE* AS BLACK AND WHITE.
COME ON! THE REST OF US AIN'T NOWHERE NEAR SMART AS YOU AND EVEN *WE* KNOW T A N'T THAT EASY.
THE TRUTH'S THE WORLD'S A COMPLICATED MESS AND SOMET MES IT TAKES COMPLICATED SOLUTIONS TO *DEAL* WITH IT.
I DON'T DISAGREE, HOB—AND I NEVER INTENDED TO OVERSIMPLIFY THE WORLD WE LIVE IN.
BUT IT SEEMS MORE AND MORE THAT IT'S BECOME *FAR TOO EASY* FOR US TO SACRIFICE THE GOOD IN ORDER TO CONFRONT THE BAD.
THE OTHERS MAY NOT SEE THIS AS MIKEY AND I DO, BUT THEY'VE NEVER SUFFERED HUN'S VENOM THE WAY *WE* HAVE.
YOU'VE INVITED A SERPENT INTO THE GARDEN, OLD HOB...
...AND THAT IS SOMETH NG I S.MPLY *CANNOT* ABIDE BY.

WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF YOU? YOU GOT A PROBLEM WITH MY DECISION?
AMMO
I'M... I'M STILL TRYING TO PROCESS IT.
MAN, I WISH WE DIDN'T HAVE TO FIGHT AT ALL.
I'VE GOT MY WORK—THAT'S ENOUGH FOR ME.
MINE'S NOT TO QUESTION WHY, SIR!
NO PROBLEM, HOB. IT'S A SOUND STRATEGY.
WELL, I GOT A PROBLEM, THAT'S FOR SURE.
"SOUND STRATEGY" OR NOT, WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A FAMILY, HOB. NO MORE SECRETS. NO MORE LIES.
IF WE'RE GONNA HAVE "COMPLICATED SOLUTIONS," WE DAMN WELL BETTER HAVE A SAY IN THEM.
C'MON, MUTAN MALS, LET'S ROLL.
IF WE'RE LUCKY, PETE'LL ONLY HAVE BURNED HALF THE HOUSE DOWN.
I SHOULD GET GOING, TOO. HUN'S GONNA WAKE UP ANY SECOND AND I REALLY DON'T WANNA BE HERE FOR THAT.

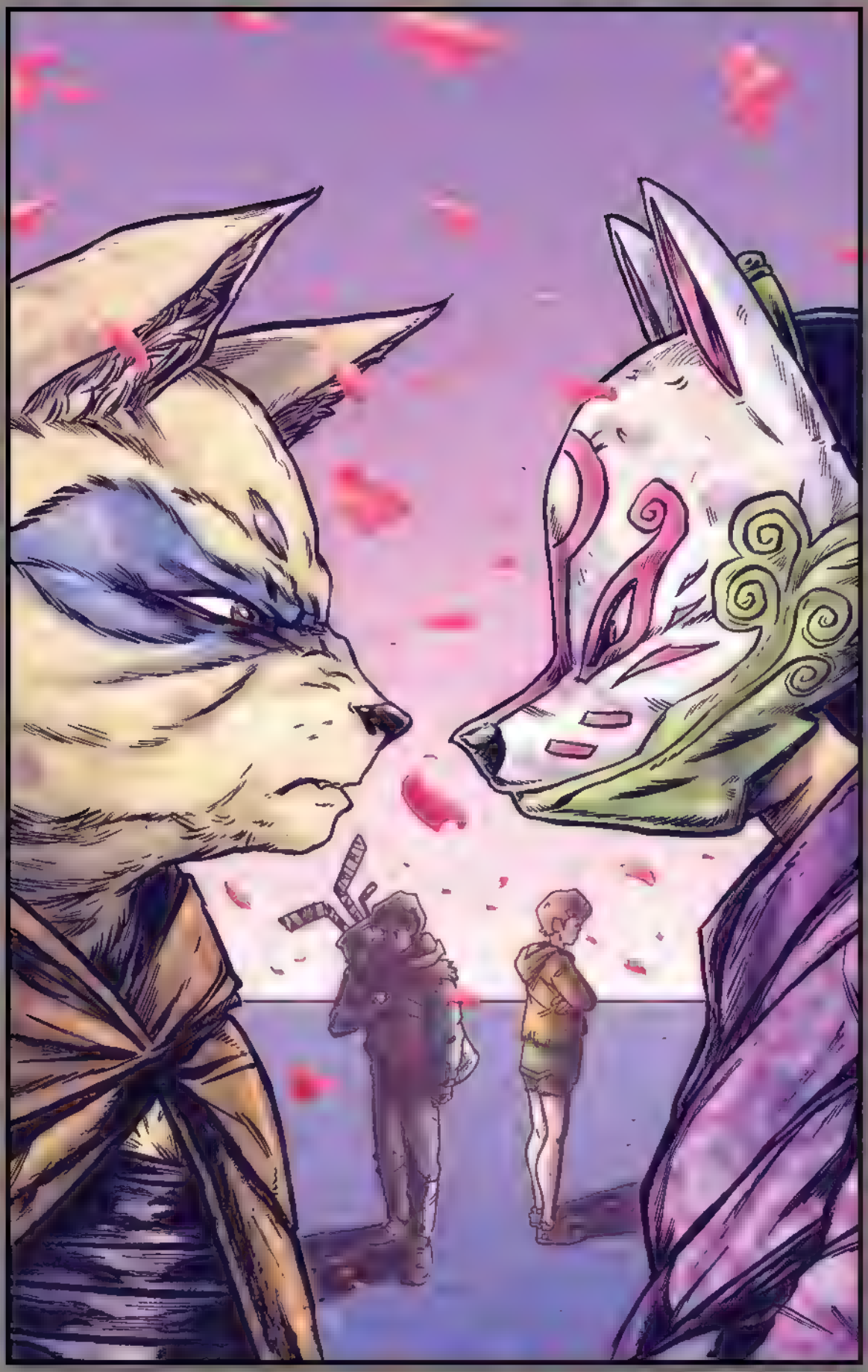
GRAHH!
AUGH!
SHKK!
YOU THINK I CARE WHAT YOU WANT, TURTLE?! DO YOU?!
I LET YOU ONTO MY TEAM AFTER ALL THAT RAT'S BEEN PUTTIN' YOU THROUGH AND YOU THANK ME BY TRYIN' TO WRECK EVERYTHING I BUILT!
SLASH WAS RIGHT— I INVITED A SNAKE INTO THE MIX, BUT IT WASN'T HUN.
IT WAS YOU!
WELL, LITTLE SNAKE, JUST REMEMBER THIS—I NEVER FORGET...

"...AND I NEVER FORGIVE."
HEY, BIG GUY... THOUGHT YOU'D BE GONE BY NOW.
NO, MIKEY. I WANTED TO BE SURE YOU WERE OKAY.
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR ARM?
OH... THIS? I THINK IT HAPPENED WHEN I, UM... FOUGHT HUN.
ARE YOU SURE?
YEAH, SURE. IT'S NOTHIN', DUDE.
SO, UH... I'VE BEEN THINKIN' IT'S TIME FOR ME TO GO HOME. TO THE LAIR. CLEAN IT UP AND TURN IT INTO A COOL BACHELOR PAD OR SOMETHIN'.
AND YOU KNOW, YOU COULD, UM... COME, TOO. WITH MY FAMILY STAYING AT THE FOOT HEADQUARTERS NOW, THERE'S PLENTY OF ROOM.
IT'S VERY KIND OF YOU TO OFFER, MIKEY, BUT I THINK I'M GOING TO HAVE TO DECLINE.
MY WHOLE LIFE, I'VE FELT LIKE SOMEONE ELSE'S PROPERTY. FIRST, I WAS STOCKMAN'S LAB EXPERIMENT, THEN LATER, DESPITE HIS BEST INTENTIONS, HOB'S PLAYTHING.
AFTER ALL THE AMAZING CHANGES I'VE GONE THROUGH, THAT FEELING OF INADEQUACY HAS NEVER LEFT ME AND I THINK IT'S PAST TIME I VENTURE OUT ON MY OWN AND FINALLY LEARN WHAT IT IS TO BE MY OWN MASTER.
BUT BEFORE I GO, I WANT YOU TO KNOW, MIKEY, YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN— AND WILL ALWAYS BE— MY HERO.
FAREWELL, MY FRIEND.

EPILOGUE.
NEAR BURNOW ISLAND.
SO, COLONEL KNIGHT, IS THIS THE GOOD SERGEANT YOU'VE TOLD ME SO MUCH ABOUT?
YES, SIR...
...SERGEANT ALEX WINTER. THE BEST OF MY BEST.
HE'LL BE BRIEFING US ON ALL HE'S LEARNED ABOUT THE MUTANTS DURING HIS RECENT RECONNAISSANCE.
AND I THINK YOU'LL BE VERY INTERESTED IN MY REPORT...
...AGENT BISHOP.



art by KEVIN EASTMAN
colors by RONDA PATTISON



ISSUE #55

HM.
"DUDE, GIVE IT UP...
...YOU'RE NEVER GONNA TOP MY HIGH SCORE.
TOP NOTHIN'. I'M GONNA CRUSH IT, LITTLE BRO.
THAT'S PRETTY BIG TALK, RAPH, FROM A GUY WHO'S USING CHEAT CODES.
WHO'RE YOU KIDDING, LEO...
"...YOU'RE JUST MAD BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T THINK OF THAT STRATEGY TO BEAT MIKEY FIRST."
HEH.
OH...
...WOW
MIKEY!

"DID YOU DO THIS, MY SON?"
THIS IS QUITE IMPRESSIVE.
YEP—ALL BY MYSELF! IT MEANS "FATHER". TO CELEBRATE FATHER'S DAY!
INDEED. AND IT IS CERTAINLY A WONDERFUL GIFT, MICHELANGELO, THOUGH YOU SHOULD KNOW...
...EVERY DAY I AM YOUR FATHER IS A CELEBRATION FOR ME.
MAN...
...HOW DID THINGS GET SO MESSED UP?

ALOPEX?
YO, EARTH TO ALOPEX!
WHA-HUH?
DANG, GIRL, I'VE ONLY BEEN CALLIN' YOUR NAME FOREVER. DON'T KNOW WHAT PLANET YOU'RE ON LATELY, BUT IT SURE AIN'T THIS ONE.
SORRY, ANGEL... I'VE JUST BEEN A LITTLE OUT OF IT LATELY.
JUST A LITTLE?
OKAY, A LOT.
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT BUT IT FEELS LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING STUCK IN THE BACK OF MY MIND... A LOST MEMORY THAT I CAN'T SEEM TO JAR LOOSE.
AND WHENEVER I TRY, IT'S LIKE...
...IT'S LIKE I DRIFT OFF AND FORGET SOME MORE. I'VE NEVER FELT SO UNFOCUSED.
HEY, IT'S COOL, GIRL—YOU'RE PROBABLY JUST WORN OUT WITH ALL YOU GOT GOIN' ON BETWEEN HELP'N' MASTER SPLINTER AND ME.
I GUESS. MAYBE I JUST NEED TO TAKE A BREAK FROM THE ACTION FOR A BIT.
GOOD IDEA... AS SOON AS WE'RE DONE TONIGHT.
THEY'RE HERE.

OKAY, YOU REMEMBER THE PLAN?
HOW COULD I FORGET?
I ACT LIKE BAIT WHILE YOU VIDEOTAPE IT. NOT TOO ELABORATE
HEY, HAROLD SAID HE NEEDS AS MUCH INTEL AS WE CAN GET...
REC
...AND HE THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE THE EASIEST WAY TO DO IT.
YEAH?
EASY FOR WHOM?
HEY! STREET PHANTOMS!
REMEMBER ME?!
YO, MAZE. AIN'T THAT THE MUTANT THAT SLASHED YOUR CLOAK?*
YEAH, THAT'S HER, TURK.
C'MON...
...WE OWE THAT MUTT SOME PAYBACK!
*See TMNT #52 - B.C.

I HOPE YOU'RE RECORDING, ANGE...
REC
...BECAUSE HERE WE GO!
NICE MOVE...
...NOW SEE IF YOU CAN GET IN CLOSER ON THEIR WEAPONS.
YEAH, SURE...
TAP!
HNF!
...NO PROBLEM.
OH, YOU GOT PROBLEMS ALL RIGHT, MUTT.
KIKKEK
GYAHH!

ALOPEX! I'M COMING!
NO! KEEP RECORDING, ANGEL...
...THAT HURT MY PRIDE MORE THAN ANYTH NG.
YOU SURE?
TRUST ME.
OKAY—BUT LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH.
I'M NOT ABOUT TO LET WHATEVER'S DISTRACTIN' YOU GET YOU KILLED.
I JUST NEED TO GET HAROLD A SHOT OF THE CLOAKS PHASIN' OUT AND THEN WE'RE HISTORY.
UNDERSTOOD.
OKAY, YOU TWO—ENOUGH OF THE GAMES. I'M TAKING YOU BOTH DOWN.
HATE TO BREAK IT TO YA—
HI-YAH!
—CAN'T TAKE DOWN WHAT YOU CAN'T TOUCH.
I WAS COUNTING ON IT.

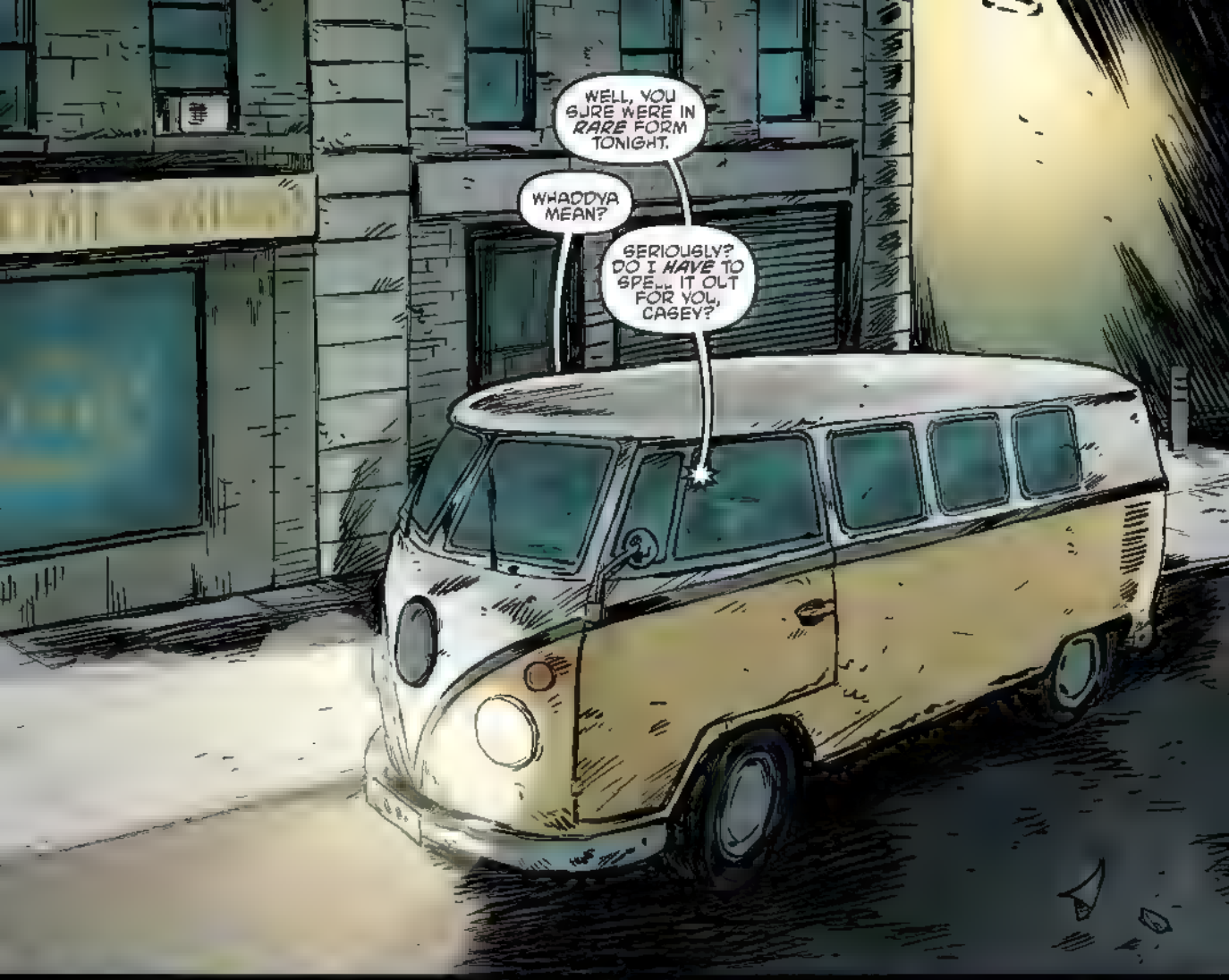
NOBODY, DID YOU GET THAT?
YEP.
NOW DITCH THOSE IDIOTS AND GO GET YOURSELF SOME SERIOUS SHUT-EYE. YOU NEED IT.
BUT I THOUGHT WE COULD HANG OUT A LITTLE LONGER.
STOP BEIN' STUBBORN GO HOME AND CATCH SOME Z'S, GIRL!
SHK!
OKAY, OKAY...
...BOSSY MUCH?
I HEARD THAT!
UH... DID WE W.N?

FINE FOOD & SPIRITS
CLEARY'S
PUB RESTAURANT
BOOKS FOR THE SOUL
WOW, I'VE REALLY BEEN MISSING THIS—
—ALL OF US TOGETHER AT THE SAME TIME.
IT'S NICE.
YES, IT IS.
YOUR DAD AND I JUST WISH WE COULD'VE AFFORDED SOMETHING A BIT FANCIER, KIDDO, BUT UNTIL WE GET THE STORE UP AND RUNNING, LOW-BUDGET CELEBRATING IS THE BEST WE GOT.
MOM, DON'T EVEN WORRY ABOUT IT. YOU KNOW I LOVE THE FOOD HERE.
BESIDES, NOW THAT I FINALLY HAVE MY DEGREE, PARTY TIME'S OVER. TIME TO GET TO WORK.
WELL, TO BE HONEST, HON, YOU'VE NEVER BEEN WHAT I'D CALL A PARTY GIRL...
BUT DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING LINED UP ON THE JOB FRONT?
I'VE BEEN LOOKING INTO A FEW PROMISING LEADS, DAD. ONE THING'S FOR SURE...
MENU
MENU
...I PLAN TO CAPITALIZE ON MY INTERN EXPERIENCE
WHAT ABOUT YOU, CASEY? ANY PLANS FOR GOING BACK TO SCHOOL?
NOT REALLY, MRS. O'NEIL.
...I ALREADY TOLD HIM YOU GUYS WOULD WANT HIM TO MAKE SCHOOL HIS PRIORITY.
MENU
I JUST PLAN ON CONCENTRATIN' ON THE STORE STUFF FOR A WHILE.
YOU KNOW, CASEY, WE'RE MORE THAN HAPPY TO GIVE YOU WHATEVER T ME YOU NEED AWAY FROM THE STORE TO FURTHER YOUR EDUCATION.
HE KNOWS THAT, DAD...
AND I TOLD YOU I GOT OTHER MORE IMPORTANT PRIORITIES RIGHT NOW.
MENU
SOOO...
WHO'S READY TO ORDER?

WHERE SHOULD I PUT THIS?
AH, ALOPEX— HOW PLEASANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
IF YOU SAY SO.
JUST TELL ME WHERE YOU WANT THIS SO I CAN GET TO BED. IT'S BEEN A LONG NIGHT.
INDEED.
ON THIS TABLE WILL BE FINE. THANK YOU.
HERE YOU GO.
THE ELITE NINJA WILL BE BY IN THE MORNING TO PICK IT UP...
...I PLAN ON SLEEPING IN.
BUT WOULDN'T YOU LIKE SOME CONVERSATION BEFORE YOU TAKE YOUR REST?
NOT REALLY. NO.
PLEASE...
...I INSIST.

THERE.
MUCH BETTER
I...
WAIT! WHAT...
...WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO ME?
YOU POSSESS THE WILL—THE STRENGTH—TO RESIST?
ARE YOU TRYING TO GET IN MY HEAD, WITCH?!
—HOW ABSOLUTELY IMPRESSIVE.
JUST LIKE A TRUE FOX!
HNNF!

AND THAT IS WHAT YOU ARE, CHILD—A FOX.
BEING PURSUED
BEING HUNTED
THE BEARS THAT HUNT YOU COME IN MANY FORMS.
IN THE GUISE OF CAMARADERIE, THE BEASTS LAY THEIR SNARES
KINDNESS AND COMPASSION IS THEIR BAIT.
IF YOU ARE A FOOLISH FOX, YOU WILL BE SWAYED BY THE RUSE
BUT IF YOU ARE WISE... IF YOU ARE SLY...
YOU WILL DEFEAT THE BEARS AT THEIR OWN GAME. ALL OF THEM.
YOU WILL DESTROY THEM BEFORE THEY CAN DESTROY YOU
IT IS A TRUTH YOU MUST NEVER FORGET—NOR EVER DENY.
TO DO OTHERWISE IS TO COURT DANGER...
...DESTRUCTION...
...AND DEATH.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND, CHILD?
Y-YES. IF I WANT TO SURVIVE, I... I MUST BE SLY.
INDEED
AND SOON, TOGETHER, WE WILL PUT OUR CUNNING INTO ACTION, CHILD
ONE BEAR WATCHES AS ANOTHER SLUMBERS.
WE MUST THWART THE WATCHER.
IF WE ARE TO AWAKEN THE SLEEPER.
NOW, GO SEEK OUT YOUR BED CHAMBERS, REST YOUR WEARY HEAD.
"...AND REMEMBER THIS VISIT ONLY AS A DREAM."
SO. TIRED


WELL, YOU SURE WERE IN *RARE* FORM TONIGHT.
WHADDYA MEAN?
SERIOUSLY? DO I *HAVE* TO SPELL IT OUT FOR YOU, CASEY?

YOU WERE A *TOTAL JERK* AT THE RESTAURANT TONIGHT.
NO, I WASN'T.
YES, YOU *WERE.*
YOU BARELY SAID TWO WORDS TO ANYONE THE *ENTIRE* TIME WE WERE THERE, AND THE FEW YOU *DID* SAY WERE RUDE AND POUTY.
YOU MADE IT PRETTY DARN *AWKWARD* FOR EVERYONE.
WHATEVER.

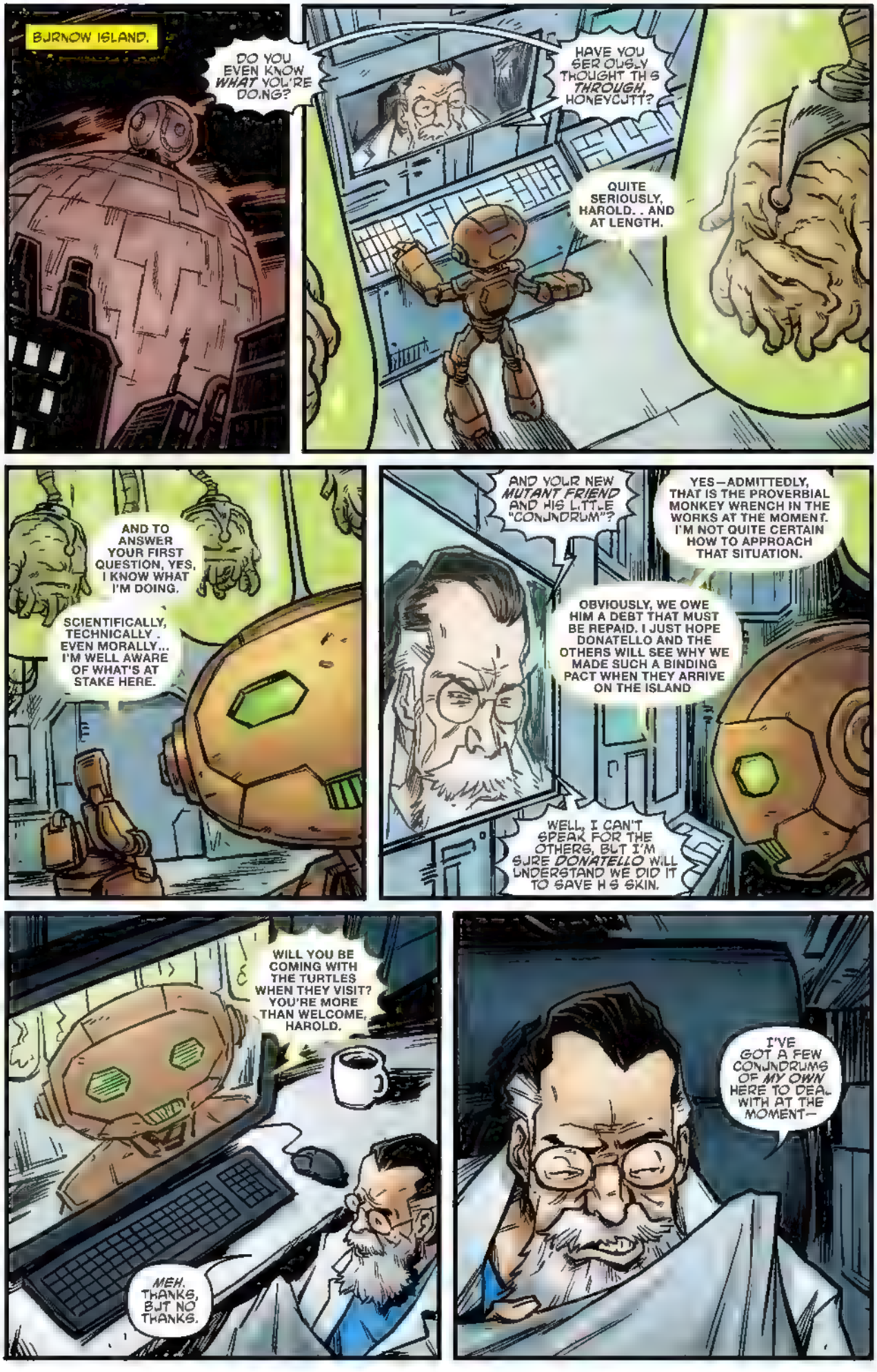
OH, STUFF YOUR "WHATEVER." I'M NOT LETTING YOU OFF THAT EASY.
TONIGHT'S NOT THE FIRST TIME YOU'VE BEEN LIKE THIS—YOU'VE BEEN ACTING STRANGE EVER SINCE WE GOT BACK TO NEW YORK.*
YOU'RE ANGRY AND DEFENSIVE AND... AND DISTANT ALL THE TIME NOW.
*See TMNT: Casey & April #1-6
WHAT'S GOING ON, CASEY? PLEASE, WHATEVER IT IS, LET ME HELP.
I DON'T NEED HELP, APRIL. I GOT THIS.
DON'T BE STUBBORN, CASE. EVERYONE NEEDS HELP SOMETI—
WHAT THE?!
ARMACOLA!
OH, HELL NO.
WHAT IN THE WORLD...?

YO! YOU GONNA PICK THAT UP?
YOU TALKIN' TO ME?
YEAH, I'M TALKIN' TO YOU. PICK THAT UP. NOW.
YOU SERIOUS, LITTLE MAN?
AS A HEART ATTACK.
WHAT'RE YOU—SOME KINDA TRASH COP?
GUESS SO.
GAHH!
FWAP
NOW, BEFORE I GET REALLY ROUGH.
YEAH... YEAH, MAN. IT'S COO....
CASEY!
STOP! GET OFF HIM!
APRIL? WHAT THE HELL?!
THAT'S WHAT I'M WONDERING!
MAN, HOW'D I END UP ON FRIGGIN' CRAZY STREET TONIGHT?

WHY'D YOU BUTT IN LIKE THAT? I HAD THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL.
CONTROL?! YOU WERE SHOVING THAT POOR GUY'S FACE INTO THE ASPHALT!
YOU MEAN INTO THE GARBAGE HE THREW ON MY STREET, DON'T YA?
YOUR STREET?!
IN CASE YOU'VE FORGOTTEN, THIS IS THE STREET WHERE MY PARENTS' STORE IS—THE STORE WHERE THEY'VE BEEN NICE ENOUGH TO GIVE YOU A JOB AND A PLACE TO LIVE.
IF IT'S ANYBODY'S STREET, IT'S THEIRS, BUT YOU DON'T SEE THEM OUT HERE BEATING UP LITTERBUGS.
SECOND TIME AROUND
'CAUSE THAT'S MY JOB—THE ONE THEY HIRED ME FOR. SECURITY.
CASEY, DO YOU REALLY THINK THIS IS HOW THEY WANT YOU TO DO IT?
COME ON—YOU KNOW BETTER THAN THAT.
WHATEVER. I'M JUST DOIN' MY PART TO KEEP EVERYONE SAFE IN THIS WAR.
AIN'T NO DIFFERENT THAN YOU HAVIN' YOUR FACE BURIED IN THAT STUPID NINJA SCROLL ALL THE TIME.
MAYBE...
...EXCEPT I'M DOING MY FIGHTING WITH MY BRAIN, NOT MY FISTS.
SO, WHAT, MISS COLLEGE DEGREE?
YOU SAYIN' I'M DUMB OR SOMETHIN'?

NO... NO, CASEY, THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT. I'M SORRY, I—
NAH, YOU DON'T GOTTA APOLOGIZE, APRIL. I KNOW YOU THINK I'M ONLY GOOD FOR BRAINLESS STUFF.
BUT THAT'S OKAY, 'CAUSE I KNOW WHAT I'M DOIN'S IMPORTANT, EVEN IF I'M LEFT MY FISTS TO DO IT.
I AIN'T ABOUT TO LET THE PEOPLE I CARE ABOUT GET HURT. DON'T MATTER IF MOST OF 'EM THINK I'M JUST SOME IGNORANT HICK.
OKAY, NOBODY EVER SAID YOU'RE AN IGNORANT HICK— NOT ME, NOT MY PARENTS... NOBODY.
AND WE ALL KNOW HOW HARD YOU WORK TO KEEP US SAFE— JUST LIKE WE WORRY ABOUT YOU BEING SAFE, TOO...
...ME, MOST OF ALL.
IT JUST SEEMS LIKE, WHATEVER GOOD INTENTIONS YOU MAY HAVE, THE MORE YOU BEAT OTHER PEOPLE UP, THE MORE YOU'RE BEATING YOURSELF UP.
YER WRONG—THIS AIN'T ABOUT ME BEATIN' MYSELF UP, APRIL.
IT'S ABOUT DOIN' WHAT I GOTTA DO TO MAKE SURE WHAT THE RAT KING SAID 'BOUT ME GETTIN' WEAK AND LETTIN' OTHERS GET HURT DON'T COME TRUE.
CASEY, THE RAT KING'S A TRICKSTER A LIAR. WHATEVER HE TOLD YOU, IT WAS ONLY TO PLAY WITH YOUR MIND, NOTHING MORE.
ONCE I GET THAT SCROLL DECIPHERED, I'LL BE ABLE TO TAKE HIM DOWN A NOTCH OR TWO...

... YOU'LL SEE.
THEN I GUESS YOU DON'T NEED MY HELP, HUH?
WHO NEEDS DUMB MUSCLE WHEN YOU GOT ALL THEM BRAINS TO SAVE THE DAY, RIGHT?
I DIDN'T SAY THAT.
CLOSED
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO.
CASEY, ALL I'M SAYING IS I CAN'T STAND BY QUIETLY AND WATCH ALL THE VIOLENCE THAT SURROUNDS YOU GET OUT OF CONTROL. I KNOW YOU'RE A FIGHTER—I GET THAT... AND SOMETIMES IT'S AN ADMIRABLE QUALITY.
BUT OTHER TIMES IT'S SO AGGRESSIVE AND FRIGHTENING AND, I'M SORRY, BUT I JUST DON'T WANT ANY PART OF IT.
WELL, GUESS WHAT—YOU WON'T HAVE TO ANYMORE.
THIS IS WHO I AM, APRIL, AND IF IT AIN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU, THEN I GUESS MAYBE IT'S TIME TO ADMIT THIS THING WE GOT GOIN' AIN'T GONNA WORK.
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT.
MAYBE WE DO NEED A BREAK.
YEAH? WELL... FINE.
'LEAST WE FINALLY AGREE ON SOMETHIN'.


BURNOW ISLAND.
DO YOU EVEN KNOW *WHAT* YOU'RE DOING?
HAVE YOU SERIOUSLY THOUGHT THIS *THROUGH*, HONEYCUTT?
QUITE SERIOUSLY, HAROLD. . AND AT LENGTH.
AND TO ANSWER YOUR FIRST QUESTION, YES, I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING.
SCIENTIFICALLY, TECHNICALLY . EVEN MORALLY... I'M WELL AWARE OF WHAT'S AT STAKE HERE.
AND YOUR NEW *MUTANT FRIEND* AND HIS LITTLE "CONUNDRUM"?
YES—ADMITTEDLY, THAT IS THE PROVERBIAL MONKEY WRENCH IN THE WORKS AT THE MOMENT. I'M NOT QUITE CERTAIN HOW TO APPROACH THAT SITUATION.
OBVIOUSLY, WE OWE HIM A DEBT THAT MUST BE REPAID. I JUST HOPE DONATELLO AND THE OTHERS WILL SEE WHY WE MADE SUCH A BINDING PACT WHEN THEY ARRIVE ON THE ISLAND
WELL, I CAN'T SPEAK FOR THE OTHERS, BUT I'M SURE *DONATELLO* WILL UNDERSTAND WE DID IT TO SAVE HIS SKIN.
WILL YOU BE COMING WITH THE TURTLES WHEN THEY VISIT? YOU'RE MORE THAN WELCOME, HAROLD.
MEH. THANKS, BUT NO THANKS.
I'VE GOT A FEW CONUNDRUMS OF *MY OWN* HERE TO DEAL WITH AT THE MOMENT—

"—I'LL LEAVE THAT BLASTED MESS FOR YOU TO HANDLE."
...NOT TOO SHABBY.
BUT, MAN, I'M STARVIN'.
兄弟
THERE...
WELL, THEN, YOU'RE IN LUCK, KID...
...'CAUSE WE STOPPED BY RUPERT'S ON THE WAY OVER.
WOODY SAYS HI.
PERT'S PIZZERIA
GUYS!
HEY, LITTLE BRO.
WA T— WHY ARE YOU HERE?

CAME TO SEE IF YOU WANTED TO JOIN US ON A TRIP TO BURNOW ISLAND.
THE FUGITOID'S GOT SOMETHING IMPORTANT HE WANTS TO SHOW US.
AND WE THOUGHT IT'D BE GREAT TO HAVE YOU ALONG, MIKEY.
JUST LIKE OLD TIMES.
BUT... WHAT ABOUT FATHER, AND THE FOOT?
THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THEM...
...IT'LL BE JUST THE FOUR OF US. NO FOOT CLAN.
I MEAN, IT AIN'T LIKE WE DON'T RESPECT YOU WANTIN' TO BE ALONE AND ALL, BUT THINGS HAVEN'T BEEN THE SAME WITHOUT YOU, KID.
RAPH AND DONNIE ARE RIGHT, MIKE.
THIS IS THE PERFECT CHANCE FOR US BE A TEAM AGAIN.
A FAMILY. JUST LIKE—
YEAH, YEAH—JUST LIKE OLD TIMES. I ALREADY SAID THAT, LEO.
NOW, C'MON, BEFORE THIS BABY GETS COLD...
...DIG IN!

art by KEVIN EASTMAN
colors by ROBIN PATTISON

art by MATEUS SANTOLOUCO

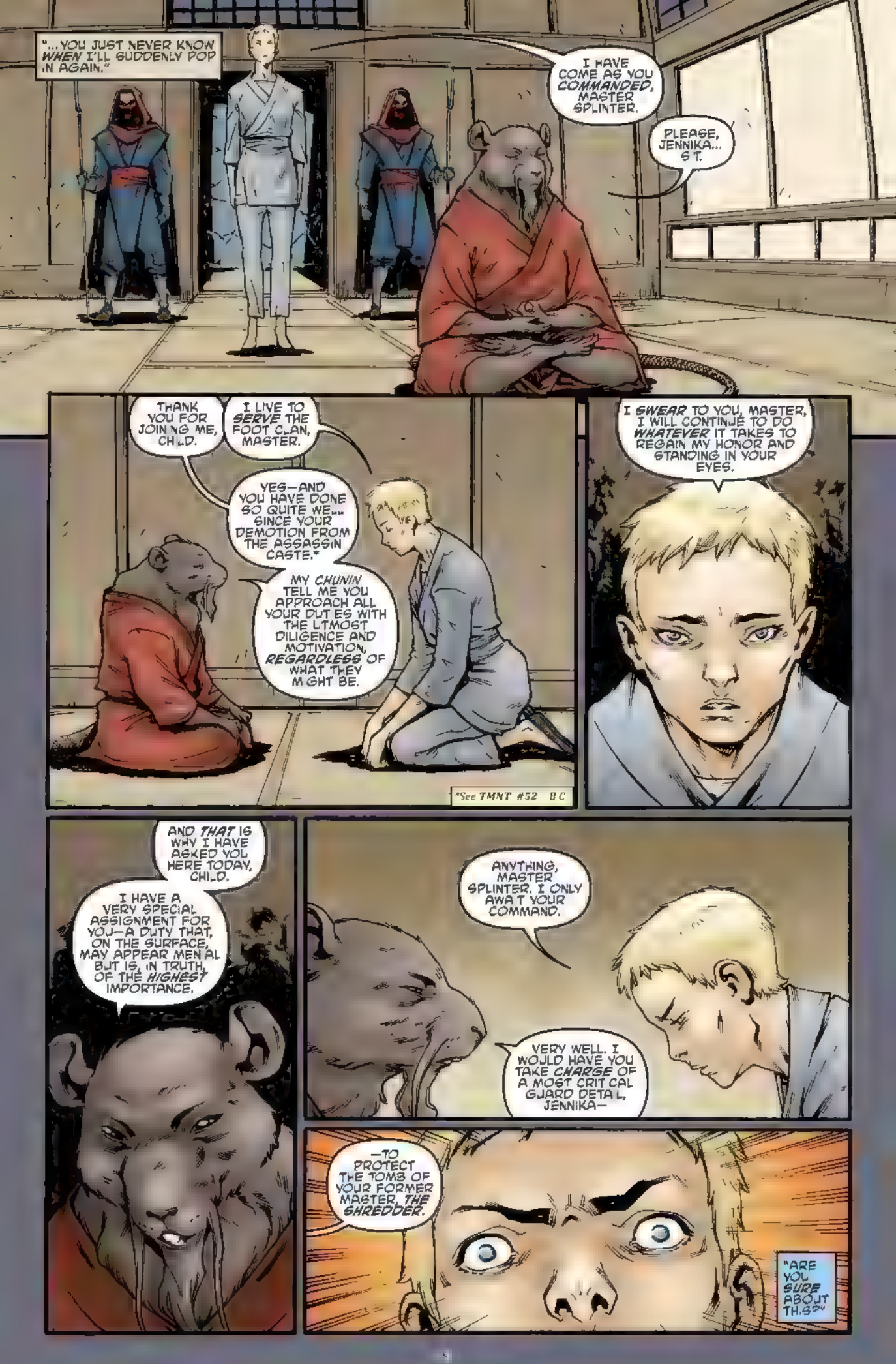
ISSUE #56

BURNOW ISLAND.
WE'RE :KOFF: RUNNING OUT OF T.ME.
HOW LONG?
WEEKS... DAYS... HOURS... WHO KNOWS?
SO WHAT ARE WE GONNA :KOFF: DO?
WHATEVER IT IS, WE HAVE TO DO IT FAST.
IF WE'RE GONNA :KOFF: SURVIVE...
BUT... HOW?
...BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY.

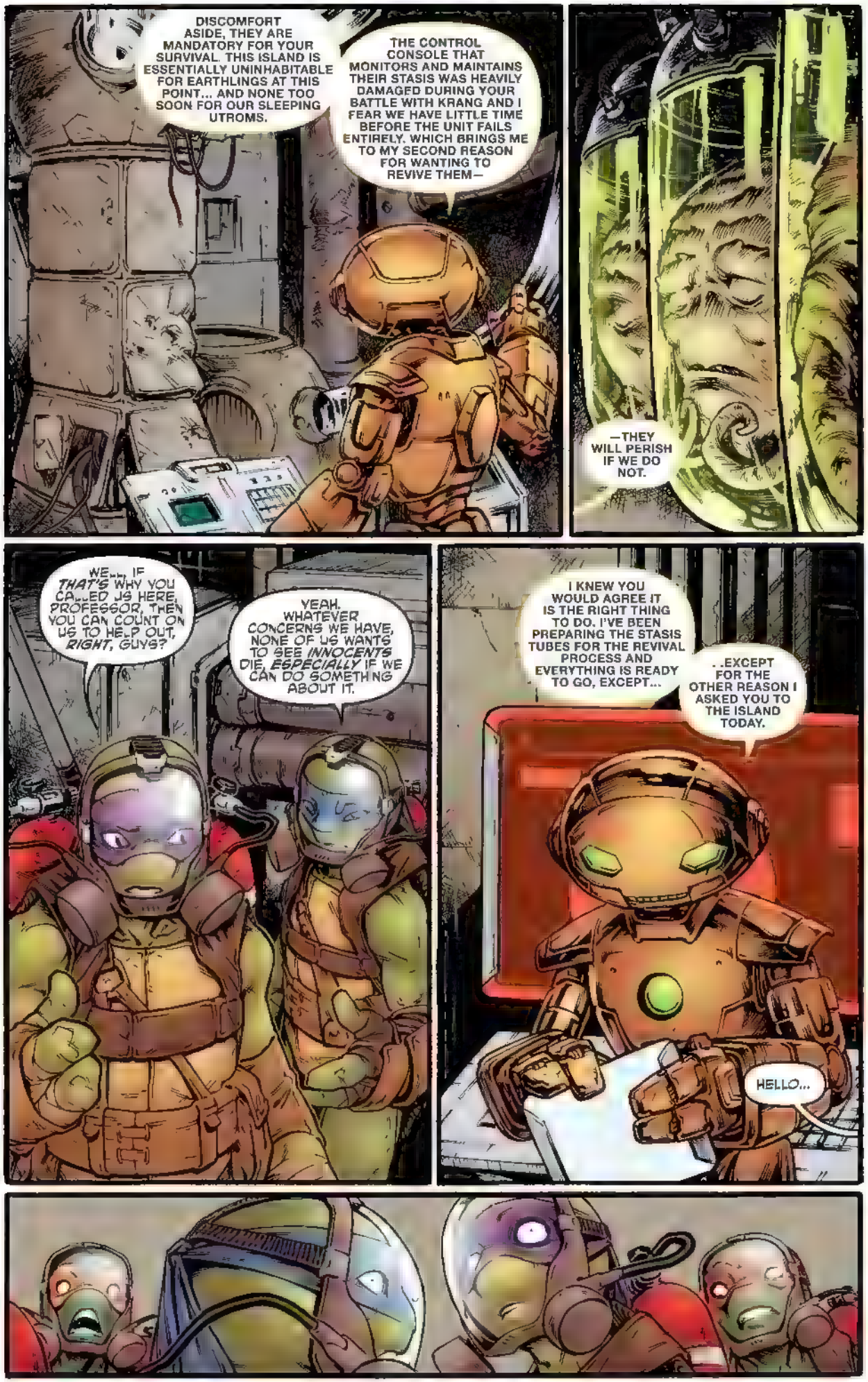
NICE OF YOU TO FINALLY GET HERE, DONATELLO. MY CABLE GUY GIVES ME A MORE ACCURATE ARRIVAL WINDOW.
WAIT— YOU GOT A CABLE GUY?
WHOA!
CHECK IT OUT, DONNIE—IT'S YOU BEFORE YOU BLEW YOURSELF UP AND BECAME, WELL... YOU AGAIN.*
DON'T TOUCH THAT!
*See TMNT #50 B.C.
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL THESE DAMNED TURTLES, "HANDS OFF?"
AND, NO, I DON'T HAVE A CABLE GUY—I WAS BEING RHETORICAL. DON'T BE OBTUSE.
WHATEVER.
ANY LUCK LEARNING ANYTHING NEW ABOUT THOSE STREET PHANTOM CLOAKS, HAROLD?
NEW? HARDLY. THESE CLOAKS MAINTAIN THE SAME TECHNOLOGICALLY INTRICATE STRUCTURE AS THEY DID WHEN I DESIGNED THEM WITH MY FORMER PARTNER.
I'D EXPLAIN FURTHER, BUT I'M FAIRLY CERTAIN ONLY DONATELLO WOULD HAVE EVEN AN INKLING OF WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT, SO WHY WASTE MY BREATH?
FINE—SAVE THE SCIENCE FOR DONNIE. BUT CAN YOU TELL ME IF YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DEVELOP ANY COUNTERMEASURES TO THESE THINGS?
EVENTUALLY.
IT'S GOING TO REQUIRE SOME SIGNIFICANT REVERSE-ENGINEERING, HOWEVER.

WHEN MY EX-PARTNER ABANDONED ME, SHE *TOOK* THE ENTIRETY OF THE DESIGN SPECS AND BLUEPRINTS WITH HER, AND MUCH OF WHAT MAKES THESE CLOAKS DO WHAT THEY DO OPERATES AT THE SUB-ATOMIC LEVEL, WHICH WAS *HER* PARTICULAR SPECIALTY.
NOT SURPRISING, CONSIDERING SHE WAS ALWAYS AS SUBTLE AS AN A-BOMB.
ANYWAY, *THAT'S* NOT WHY YOU'RE HERE. HONEYCUTT SENT THESE OVER FROM BURNOW ISLAND.
APPARENTLY THE ATMOSPHERE'S DEGRADED THERE TO THE POINT WHERE YOU'LL NEED TO WEAR THESE AT *ALL* TIMES.
GREAT—I JUST *LOVE* CLAUSTROPHOBIA.
YOU KNOW, GUYS, YOU REALLY *DON'T* HAVE TO GO IF YOU DON'T WANT TO.
WHAT—AND MISS A CHANCE TO *HANG* WITH OUR LOST LITTLE LAMB HERE? NO WAY.
YEAH, THINGS JUST HAVEN'T BEEN THE SAME WITHOUT *MIKEY* AROUND.
AWW... THANKS, FELLAS. I MISS HANGIN' WITH YOU ALL, TOO. THIS SHOULD BE FUN.
YOU WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO KNOW WHAT FUGITOID HAS IN STORE FOR US, *WOULD* YOU, HAROLD?
OH, I *KNOW*, ALL RIGHT...
...BUT I'LL *LEAVE* IT TO OUR INTERDIMENSIONAL ROBOT FRIEND TO FILL YOU IN ON THE DETAILS.
LET'S JUST SAY THAT IT'S BOUND TO TICKLE THOSE TINY *REPTILIAN BRAINS* OF YOURS.
WHAT'D HE MEAN BY THAT?
KOOM
NO IDEA. ALL I KNOW IS...

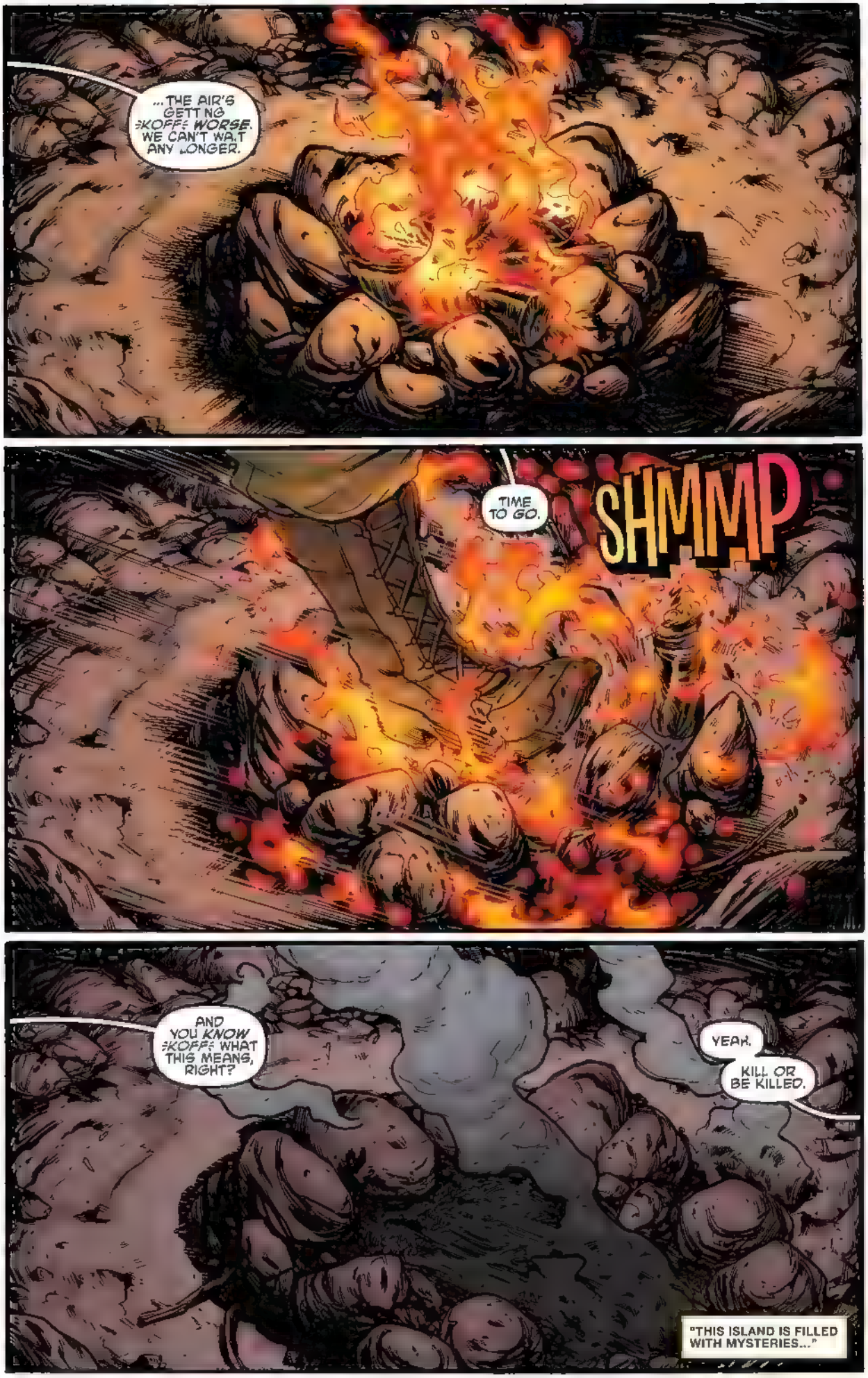
"...THAT'S ONE CREEPY DUDE."
HELLO, DEAR SISTER.
AH, BROTHER. HOW VERY TYPICAL OF YOU TO APPEAR UNEXPECTEDLY.
UNINVITED.
SINCEREST APOLOGIES, SISTER, BUT I COULDN'T RESIST.
I'VE BEEN SUBJECTED TO THAT BENEVOLENT BORE AKA RECENTLY AND I'VE CRAVED MORE STIMULATING COMPANY.*
*See TMNT: CASEY & APRIL - B.C.
AND HOW IS OUR GOOD SISTER?
OH, AS DISAPPOINTINGLY NEUTRAL AS EVER. A VERITABLE SWITZERLAND WITH WINGS.
QUITE THE IMPRESSIVE RENDERING YOU'VE COMPOSED HERE, BY THE WAY...
...NEARLY AS IMPRESSIVE AS YOUR MOST RECENT MOVES, KITSUNE. UNLIKE OUR WINGED SISTER, YOU CERTAINLY EMBRACE THE GAME WITH GUSTO.
AND YOU, RAT KING— BRINGING THE HUMAN CHILDREN SO INTIMATELY INTO THE FRAY? BOLD INDEED.
YES, WELL, I NEEDED SOMETHING TO AMUSE MYSELF IN THAT INFERNAL DESERT.
AND NOW, SADLY, I MUST BID YOU ADIEU, FAIR SISTER. I'VE ONLY JUST RETURNED TO THE CITY AND I HAVE MUCH TO DO.
THEN FAREWELL, BROTHER. AND DO NOT BE SO LONG BETWEEN VISITS IN THE FUTURE. I DO SO MISS MY FAMILY.
OH, I THINK YOU'LL BE SEEING PLENTY OF US VERY SOON... SOME SOONER THAN OTHERS.
AS FOR ME? WELL...


"...YOU JUST NEVER KNOW WHEN I'LL SUDDENLY POP IN AGAIN."
I HAVE COME AS YOU COMMANDED, MASTER SPLINTER.
PLEASE, JENNIKA... SIT.
THANK YOU FOR JOINING ME, CHILD.
I LIVE TO SERVE THE FOOT CLAN, MASTER.
YES—AND YOU HAVE DONE SO QUITE WELL... SINCE YOUR DEMOTION FROM THE ASSASSIN CASTE.*
MY CHUNIN TELL ME YOU APPROACH ALL YOUR DUTIES WITH THE UTMOST DILIGENCE AND MOTIVATION, REGARDLESS OF WHAT THEY MIGHT BE.
*See TMNT #52 B&C
I SWEAR TO YOU, MASTER, I WILL CONTINUE TO DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO REGAIN MY HONOR AND STANDING IN YOUR EYES.
AND THAT IS WHY I HAVE ASKED YOU HERE TODAY, CHILD.
I HAVE A VERY SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT FOR YOU—A DUTY THAT, ON THE SURFACE, MAY APPEAR MENIAL BUT IS, IN TRUTH, OF THE HIGHEST IMPORTANCE.
ANYTHING, MASTER SPLINTER. I ONLY AWAIT YOUR COMMAND.
VERY WELL. I WOULD HAVE YOU TAKE CHARGE OF A MOST CRITICAL GUARD DETAIL, JENNIKA—
—TO PROTECT THE TOMB OF YOUR FORMER MASTER, THE SHREDDER.
"ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?"

I MEAN, YOU'RE THE EXPERT, PROFESSOR, BUT AFTER EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED WITH KRANG, DON'T YOU THINK RELEASING THE OTHER UTROMS IS A LITTLE... I DON'T KNOW... RISKY?
THERE'S RISK INHERENT TO ANYTHING INVOLVING THE UTROMS, LEONARDO. I WON'T DENY IT—I HAVE A LONG PERSONAL HISTORY WITH THEIR KIND, AND MUCH OF IT HAS BEEN TRAGIC
REGARDLESS, I TRULY BELIEVE REVIVING THEM FROM THEIR LONG STASIS IS THE PROPER COURSE OF ACTION FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS.
LIKE WHAT?
WELL, FIRST AND FOREMOST, THERE'S THE MORALITY OF IT, RAPHAEL. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT DENYING FREEDOM TO INDIVIDUALS WHO THEMSELVES HAVE COMMITTED NO CRIMES IS NOTHING LESS THAN UNETHICAL—
—ESPECIALLY WHEN IT IS NO LONGER NECESSARY.
AS THIS MAP SHOWS, BURNOW ISLAND HAS BEEN COMPLETELY TERRAFORMED BY GENERAL KRANG'S TECHNODROME, EXTENDING TO APPROXIMATELY A 10-MILE RADIUS IN THE SURROUNDING WATERS.
Burnow Is a
THERE MAY BE POCKETS ON THE ISLAND THAT AREN'T FULLY CONTAMINATED—INCLUDING THIS COMMAND CENTER—BUT THEY ARE TEMPORARY AT BEST, WHICH IS WHY I HAD HAROLD SUPPLY YOU THE BREATHING DEVICES.
AND WE'RE LOVIN' EVERY SUFFOCAT N' SECOND OF 'EM.
AW, YOU BIG BABY—THEY AREN'T THAT BAD.

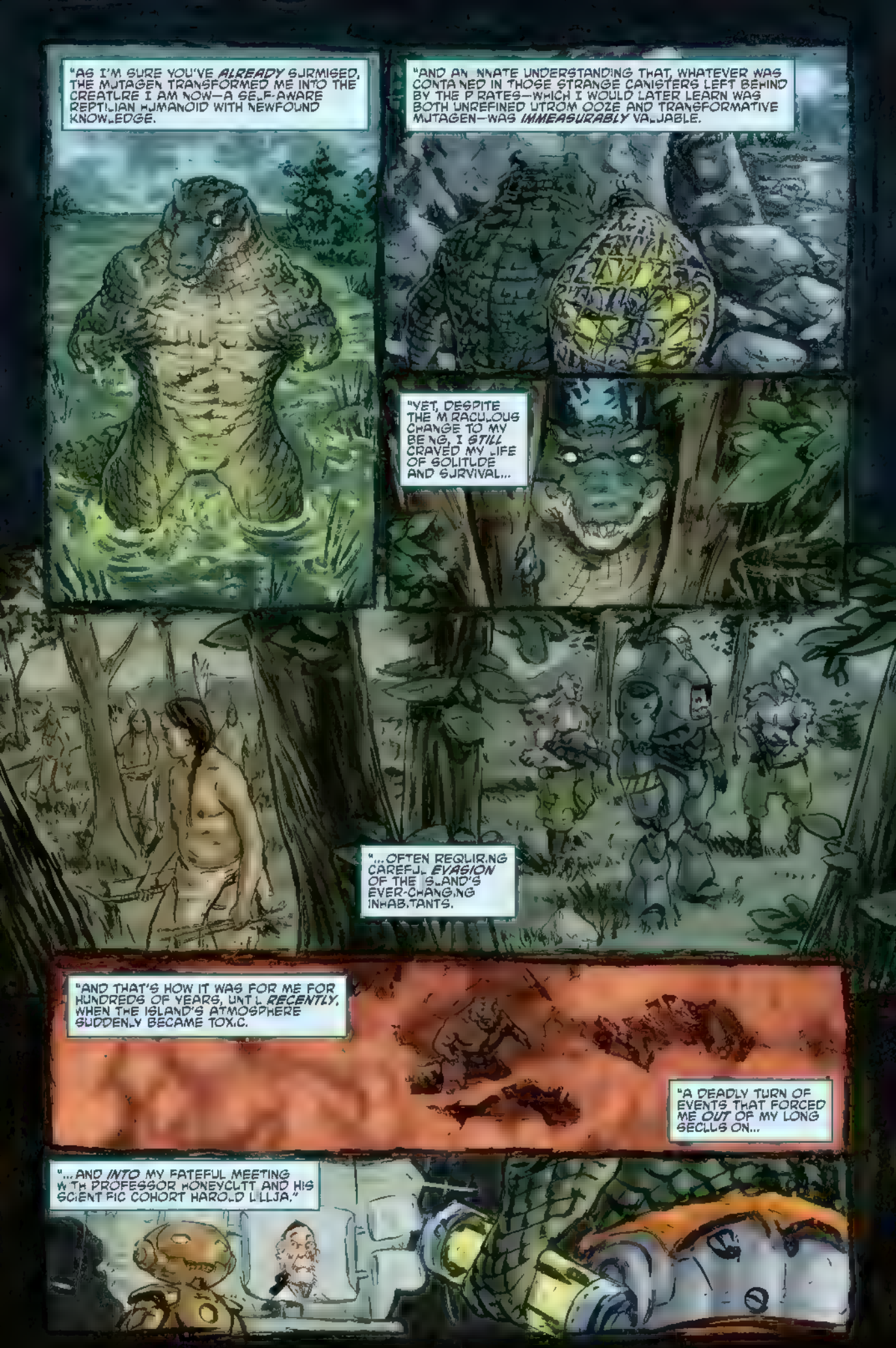

DISCOMFORT ASIDE, THEY ARE MANDATORY FOR YOUR SURVIVAL. THIS ISLAND IS ESSENTIALLY UNINHABITABLE FOR EARTHLINGS AT THIS POINT... AND NONE TOO SOON FOR OUR SLEEPING UTROMS.
THE CONTROL CONSOLE THAT MONITORS AND MAINTAINS THEIR STASIS WAS HEAVILY DAMAGED DURING YOUR BATTLE WITH KRANG AND I FEAR WE HAVE LITTLE TIME BEFORE THE UNIT FAILS ENTIRELY. WHICH BRINGS ME TO MY SECOND REASON FOR WANTING TO REVIVE THEM—
—THEY WILL PERISH IF WE DO NOT.
WE-- IF *THAT'S* WHY YOU CA--LED US HERE, PROFESSOR, THEN YOU CAN COUNT ON US TO HE-P OUT, *RIGHT*, GUYS?
YEAH. WHATEVER CONCERNS WE HAVE, NONE OF US WANTS TO SEE *INNOCENTS* DIE, *ESPECIALLY* IF WE CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.
I KNEW YOU WOULD AGREE IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO. I'VE BEEN PREPARING THE STASIS TUBES FOR THE REVIVAL PROCESS AND EVERYTHING IS READY TO GO, EXCEPT...
..EXCEPT FOR THE OTHER REASON I ASKED YOU TO THE ISLAND TODAY.
HELLO...

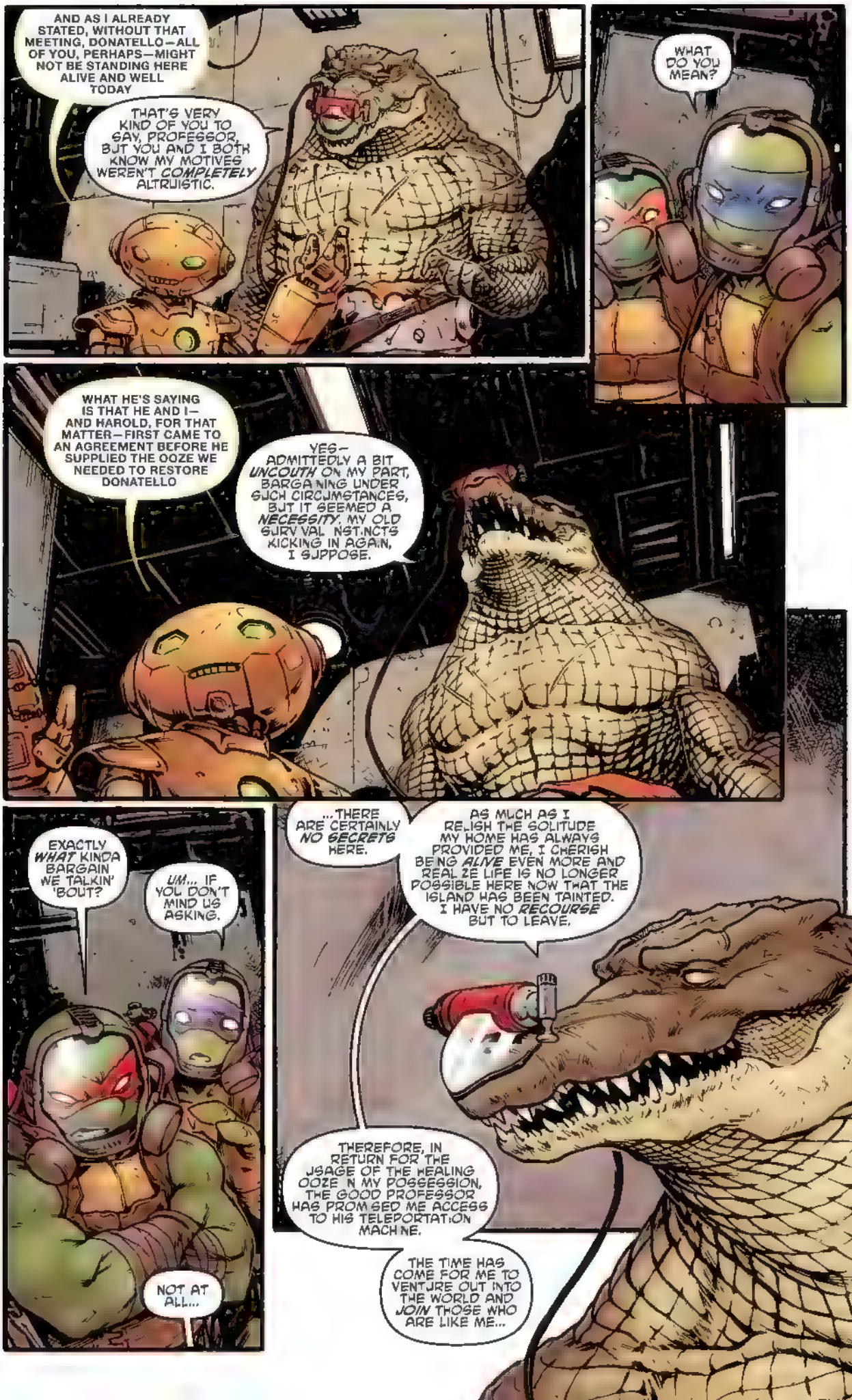
...MY NAME IS LEATHERHEAD.
"WE'RE IN TROUBLE..."


...THE AIR'S GETTING *KOFF* WORSE. WE CAN'T WAIT ANY LONGER.
TIME TO GO.
SHMMP
AND YOU KNOW *KOFF* WHAT THIS MEANS, RIGHT?
YEAH.
KILL OR BE KILLED.
"THIS ISLAND IS FILLED WITH MYSTERIES..."

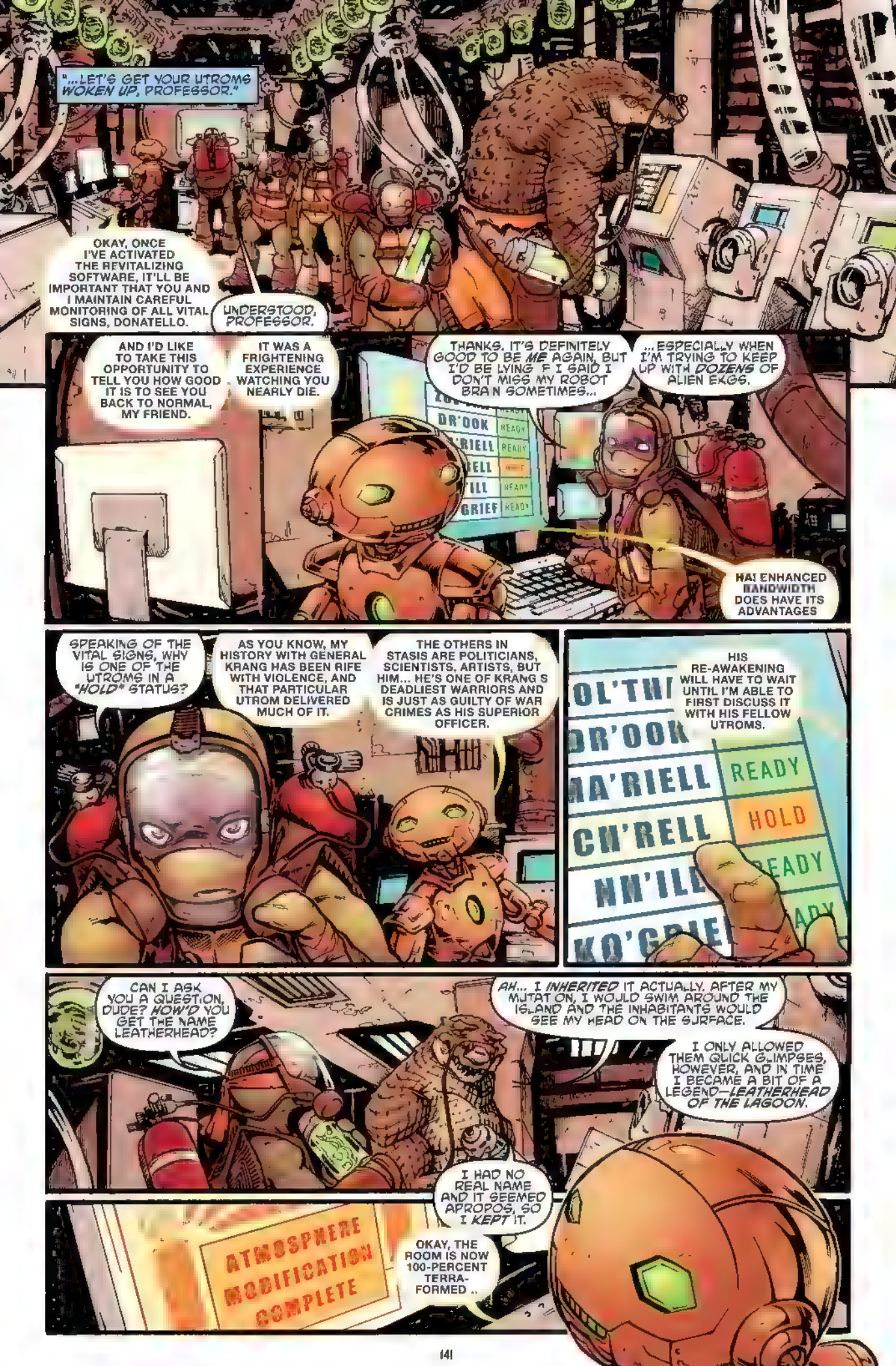
. INCLUDING OUR NEW FRIEND LEATHERHEAD, WHO APPEARED SERENDIPITOUSLY WHEN WE NEEDED HIM MOST.
YOU MAKE IT A... SOUND SO *DRAMATIC*, PROFESSOR. I JUST FOUND MYSELF IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME—IT COULD HAVE HAPPENED TO *ANYONE*.
THAT'S HARDLY TRUE.
WITHOUT LEATHERHEAD'S TIMELY HELP AND RESOURCES, WE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO RESTORE DONATELLO TO HIS PROPER BODY SO QUICKLY
THANK... THANK YOU.
DUDE, I'M SO LOST
'LEAST NOW WE KNOW WHAT HAROLD'S REPTILE CRACK WAS ALL ABOUT.
IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT YOU ARE ALL *CONFUSED* BY MY PRESENCE.
I WAS SIMILARLY STUNNED WHEN THE GOOD PROFESSOR TOLD ME OF *YOUR* EXISTENCE—OTHER REPTILE-HUMANOID MUTANTS MUCH LIKE MYSELF.
BUT JUST AS HE WAS SO KIND AS TO EXPLAIN *YOUR* ORIGINS, PLEASE ALLOW ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE *MY OWN HISTORY* AS WELL, WHICH I HOPE WILL SHED LIGHT ON EXACTLY *WHO* AND *WHAT* I AM.

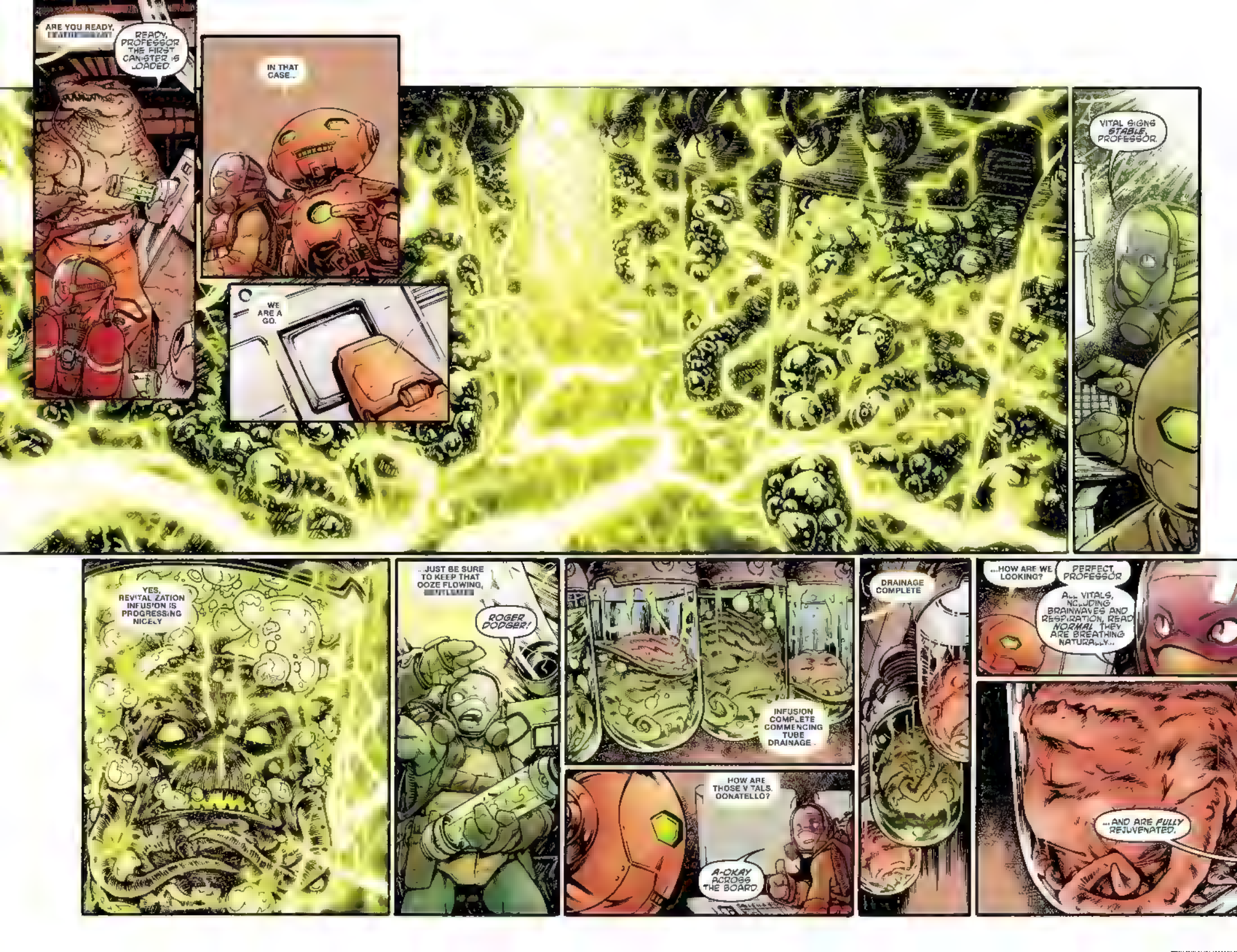
"MY STORY STARTS IN THE EARLIEST PART OF THE 18TH CENTURY, THOUGH, IN MY *PRE-MUTATED* FORM, I HAD NO TRUE CONCEPT OF TIME... NOR OF SELF.
"IT WAS A SUBLIMELY *IGNORANT* EXISTENCE DRIVEN SOLELY BY SURVIVAL INSTINCTS AND NATURAL URGES.
"THAT ALL *ENDED*, HOWEVER, WHEN PIRATES OFFLOADED A STRANGE, GREEN CARGO..."
*See TMNT: Turtles in Time #3
"...THAT WOULD *FOREVER* CHANGE MY LIFE."
RAPH! PIRATES WITH MUTAGEN! DO YA THINK—
SHHH... MIKEY! DON'T INTERRUPT.
OH, YEAH. SORRY, DUDE.
IT'S QUITE ALRIGHT.
WHAT HAPPENED WAS CERTAINLY VERY EXCITING... AND IT ONLY GOT *MORE* INTERESTING AS TIME PASSED.


"AS I'M SURE YOU'VE *ALREADY* SURMISED, THE MUTAGEN TRANSFORMED ME INTO THE CREATURE I AM NOW—A SELF-AWARE REPTILIAN HUMANOID WITH NEWFOUND KNOWLEDGE.
"AND AN INNATE UNDERSTANDING THAT, WHATEVER WAS CONTAINED IN THOSE STRANGE CANISTERS LEFT BEHIND BY THE PIRATES—WHICH I WOULD LATER LEARN WAS BOTH UNREFINED UTROM OOZE AND TRANSFORMATIVE MUTAGEN—WAS *IMMEASURABLY* VALUABLE.
"YET, DESPITE THE MIRACULOUS CHANGE TO MY BEING, I *STILL* CRAVED MY LIFE OF SOLITUDE AND SURVIVAL...
"...OFTEN REQUIRING CAREFUL *EVASION* OF THE ISLAND'S EVER-CHANGING INHABITANTS.
"AND THAT'S HOW IT WAS FOR ME FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, UNTIL *RECENTLY*, WHEN THE ISLAND'S ATMOSPHERE SUDDENLY BECAME TOXIC.
"A DEADLY TURN OF EVENTS THAT FORCED ME *OUT* OF MY LONG SECLUSION...
"...AND *INTO* MY FATEFUL MEETING WITH PROFESSOR HONEYCUTT AND HIS SCIENTIFIC COHORT HAROLD LILLJA."

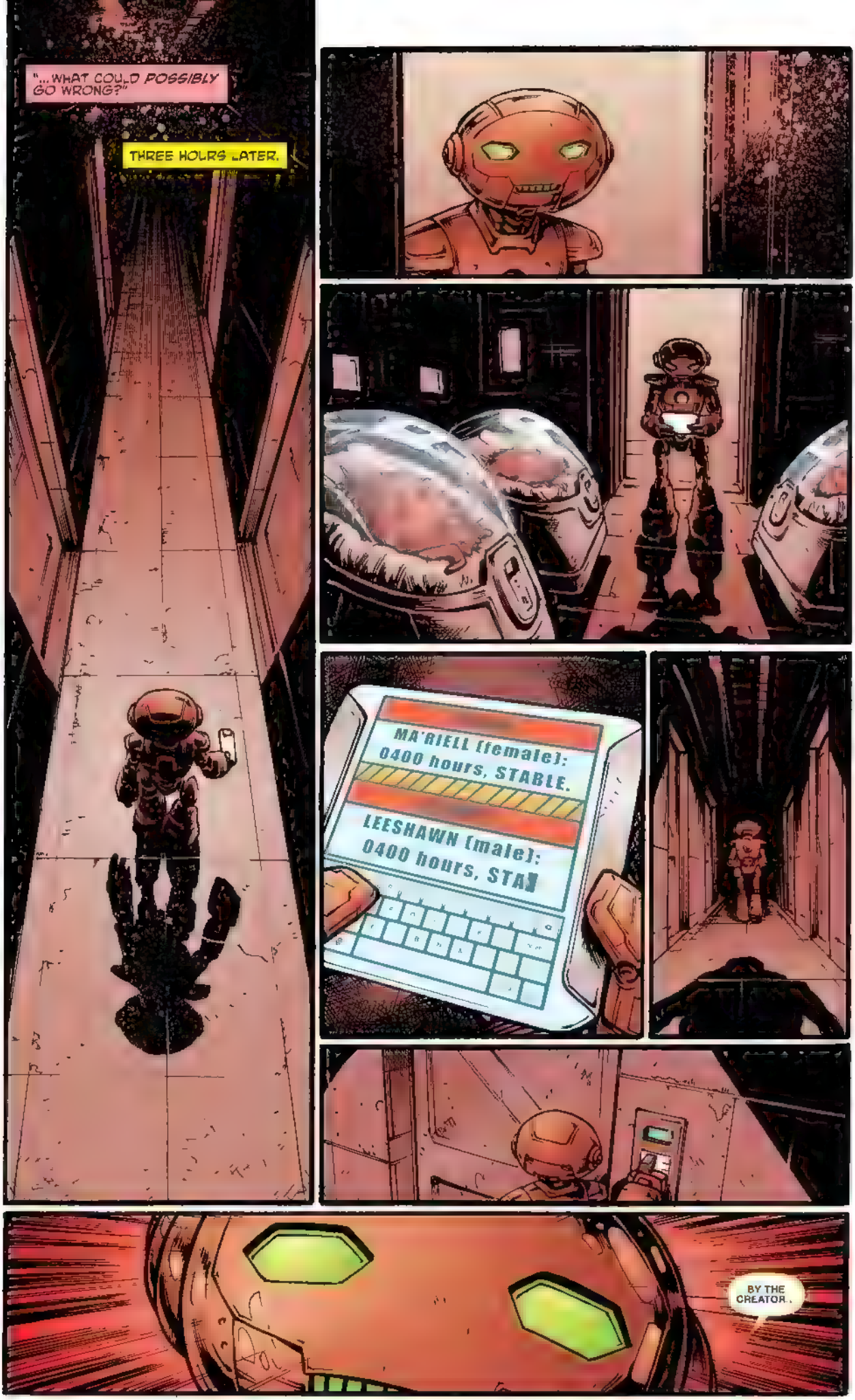

AND AS I ALREADY STATED, WITHOUT THAT MEETING, DONATELLO—ALL OF YOU, PERHAPS—MIGHT NOT BE STANDING HERE ALIVE AND WELL TODAY
THAT'S VERY KIND OF YOU TO SAY, PROFESSOR, BUT YOU AND I BOTH KNOW MY MOTIVES WEREN'T *COMPLETELY* ALTRUISTIC.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WHAT HE'S SAYING IS THAT HE AND I—AND HAROLD, FOR THAT MATTER—FIRST CAME TO AN AGREEMENT BEFORE HE SUPPLIED THE OOZE WE NEEDED TO RESTORE DONATELLO
YES—ADMITTEDLY A BIT *UNCOUTH* ON MY PART, BARGAINING UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT IT SEEMED A *NECESSITY*. MY OLD SURVIVAL INSTINCTS KICKING IN AGAIN, I SUPPOSE.
EXACTLY *WHAT* KINDA BARGAIN WE TALKIN' 'BOUT?
UM... IF YOU DON'T MIND US ASKING.
NOT AT ALL...
...THERE ARE CERTAINLY *NO SECRETS* HERE.
AS MUCH AS I RELISH THE SOLITUDE MY HOME HAS ALWAYS PROVIDED ME, I CHERISH BEING *ALIVE* EVEN MORE AND REALIZE LIFE IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE HERE NOW THAT THE ISLAND HAS BEEN TAINTED. I HAVE NO *RECOURSE* BUT TO LEAVE.
THEREFORE, IN RETURN FOR THE USAGE OF THE HEALING OOZE IN MY POSSESSION, THE GOOD PROFESSOR HAS PROMISED ME ACCESS TO HIS TELEPORTATION MACHINE.
THE TIME HAS COME FOR ME TO VENTURE OUT INTO THE WORLD AND *JOIN* THOSE WHO ARE LIKE ME...

...IN NEW YORK CITY.
UHH... PROFESSOR HONEYCUTT? CAN WE HAVE A WORD IN PRIVATE?
PLEASE EXCUSE US FOR A MOMENT.
CERTAINLY, PROFESSOR.
PROFESSOR, ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?
YEAH. WHAT DO YA KNOW ABOUT THIS GUY OTHER'N WHAT HE TOLD US?
FRANKLY, NOT MUCH. AS I SAID, HE APPEARED SUDDENLY, YET HE HAS BEEN NOTHING BUT GENUINELY HELPFUL AND FORTHCOMING EVER SINCE.
I CANNOT ALLOW HIM TO DIE ON THIS ISLAND AND I HOPED THAT, PERHAPS, YOU WOULD BE WILLING TO ESCORT HIM TO NEW YORK. I THOUGHT THAT MIGHT BE THE MOST SECURE ROUTE FOR ALL INVOLVED.
THE PROFESSOR'S RIGHT, GUYS—WE CAN'T STOP HIM FROM LEAVING HERE WHATEVER THE RISK, HE'S JUST AS INNOCENT AS THE UTROMS.
TRUE. AND IF HE'S DETERMINED TO COME TO NEW YORK, THEN IT'S PROBABLY BEST WE KEEP AN EYE ON HIM.
AND KEEP HIM AWAY FROM HOB. HE'LL TRY TO GRAB HIM FOR THE MUTANIMALS FOR SURE.
YEAH, WELL, SOMETHIN' TELLS ME SENSEI MIGHT HAVE THE SAME IDEA FOR THE FOOT.
MAYBE. BUT IT'S DEFINITELY SOMETHING WE'LL LEAVE UP TO FATHER WHEN WE GET THERE
THEN YOU WILL TAKE HIM WITH YOU?
YEAH—DOESN'T SEEM LIKE WE HAVE MUCH OF A CHOICE, PROFESSOR. BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY. WE'LL FIGURE IT ALL OUT ONCE WE GET HOME.
FOR NOW...


"...LET'S GET YOUR UTROMS WOKEN UP, PROFESSOR."
OKAY, ONCE I'VE ACTIVATED THE REVITALIZING SOFTWARE, IT'LL BE IMPORTANT THAT YOU AND I MAINTAIN CAREFUL MONITORING OF ALL VITAL SIGNS, DONATELLO.
UNDERSTOOD, PROFESSOR.
AND I'D LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO TELL YOU HOW GOOD IT IS TO SEE YOU BACK TO NORMAL, MY FRIEND.
IT WAS A FRIGHTENING EXPERIENCE WATCHING YOU NEARLY DIE.
THANKS. IT'S DEFINITELY GOOD TO BE ME AGAIN, BUT I'D BE LYING IF I SAID I DON'T MISS MY ROBOT BRAIN SOMETIMES...
...ESPECIALLY WHEN I'M TRYING TO KEEP UP WITH DOZENS OF ALIEN EKGS.
DR'OOK READY
GRIEF READY
HA! ENHANCED BANDWIDTH DOES HAVE ITS ADVANTAGES
SPEAKING OF THE VITAL SIGNS, WHY IS ONE OF THE UTROMS IN A "HOLD" STATUS?
AS YOU KNOW, MY HISTORY WITH GENERAL KRANG HAS BEEN RIFE WITH VIOLENCE, AND THAT PARTICULAR UTROM DELIVERED MUCH OF IT.
THE OTHERS IN STASIS ARE POLITICIANS, SCIENTISTS, ARTISTS, BUT HIM... HE'S ONE OF KRANG'S DEADLIEST WARRIORS AND IS JUST AS GUILTY OF WAR CRIMES AS HIS SUPERIOR OFFICER.
HIS RE-AWAKENING WILL HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL I'M ABLE TO FIRST DISCUSS IT WITH HIS FELLOW UTROMS.
DR'OOK
MA'RIELL READY
CH'RELL HOLD
CAN I ASK YOU A QUESTION, DUDE? HOW'D YOU GET THE NAME LEATHERHEAD?
AH... I INHERITED IT ACTUALLY. AFTER MY MUTATION, I WOULD SWIM AROUND THE ISLAND AND THE INHABITANTS WOULD SEE MY HEAD ON THE SURFACE.
I ONLY ALLOWED THEM QUICK GLIMPSES, HOWEVER, AND IN TIME I BECAME A BIT OF A LEGEND—LEATHERHEAD OF THE LAGOON.
I HAD NO REAL NAME AND IT SEEMED APROPOS, SO I KEPT IT.
ATMOSPHERE MODIFICATION COMPLETE
OKAY, THE ROOM IS NOW 100-PERCENT TERRA-FORMED..


ARE YOU READY, RAPH?
READY, PROFESSOR. THE FIRST CANISTER IS LOADED.
IN THAT CASE...
WE ARE A GO.
VITAL SIGNS STABLE, PROFESSOR.
YES. REVITALIZATION INFUSION IS PROGRESSING NICELY.
...JUST BE SURE TO KEEP THAT OOZE FLOWING, MIKEY!
ROGER DODGER!
INFUSION COMPLETE COMMENCING TUBE DRAINAGE.
HOW ARE THOSE V TALS, DONATELLO?
A-OKAY ACROSS THE BOARD.
DRAINAGE COMPLETE
...HOW ARE WE LOOKING?
PERFECT, PROFESSOR. ALL VITALS, INCLUDING BRAINWAVES AND RESPIRATION, READ NORMAL. THEY ARE BREATHING NATURALLY...
...AND ARE FULLY REJUVENATED.

THEN WHY ARE THEIR EYES STILL CLOSED?
BECAUSE THEY ARE STILL ASLEEP—THOUGH NO LONGER IN A STATE OF SUSPENDED ANIMATION.
THAT'S CORRECT. AND NOW WE CAN SAFELY MOVE THEM TO THE SPECIAL RECOVERY CHAMBERS I'VE PREPARED FOR THEM.
I'LL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THEIR VITALS UNTIL THEY FULLY REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS, WHICH I PREFER TO HAPPEN IN AN ENVIRONMENT FAR LESS DISTRESSING THAN THESE STASIS TUBES.
I COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND, PROFESSOR...
...THERE'S NOTHING MORE DISCONCERTING THAN FINDING YOUR ENTIRE EXISTENCE TURNED UPSIDE DOWN IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE.
WE'LL HELP YOU ENSURE OUR NEW FRIENDS ARE AS COMFORTABLE AS POSSIBLE WHEN THEY AWAKEN.
WELL, LOOKS LIKE IT WAS A SUCCESS...
...GUESS WE CAN START THINKING ABOUT HEADING HOME SOON AS WE GET THE UTROMS IN THEIR ROOMS, HUH?
HEH. YEAH. TUCKIN' IN A BUNCH OF SLIMY, BLOBBY ALIENS...


"...WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG?"
THREE HOURS LATER.
MA'RIELL (female): 0400 hours, STABLE.
LEESHAWN (male): 0400 hours, STA
BY THE CREATOR..

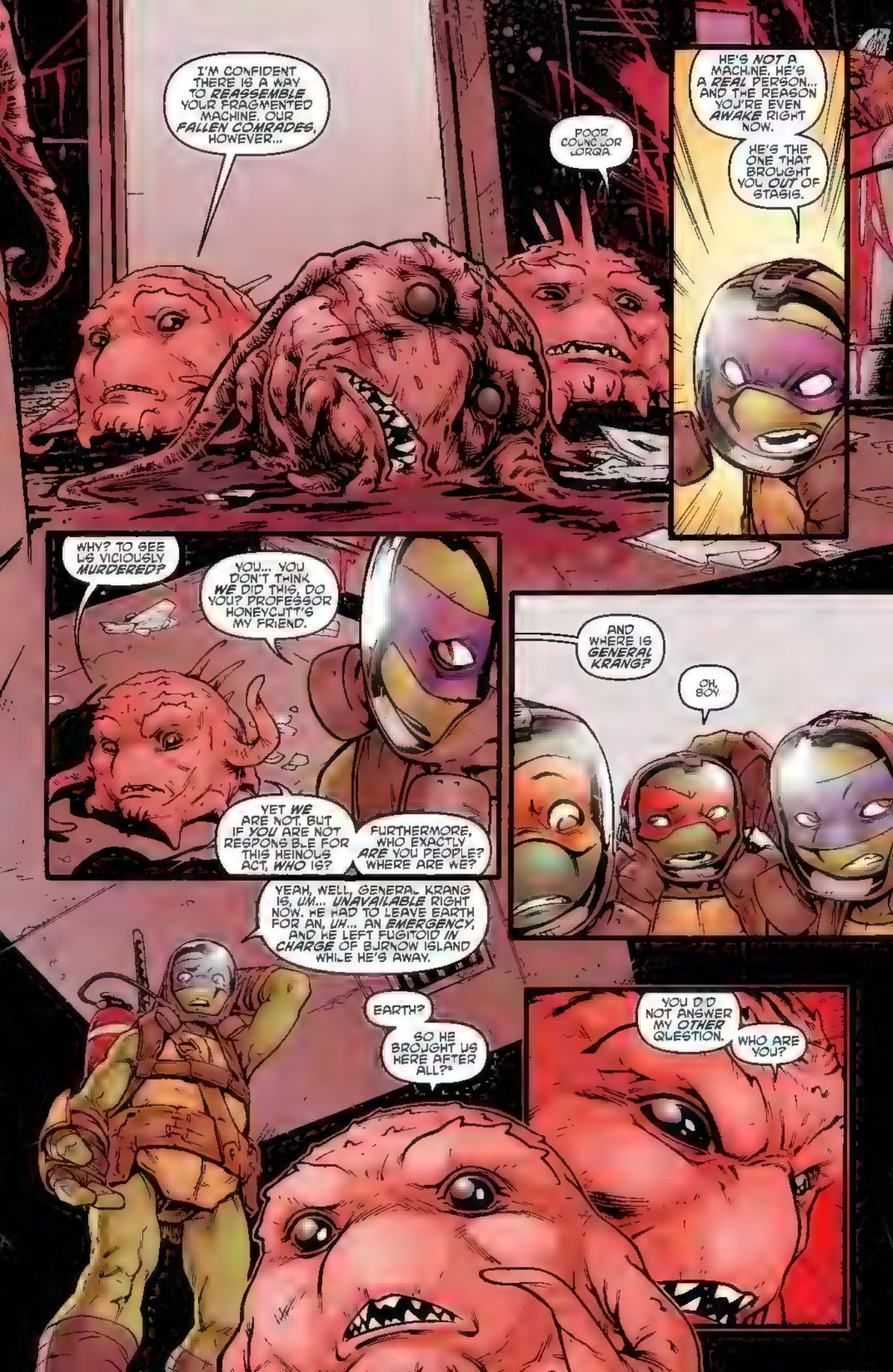
.. WHO WOULD DO SUCH A THING?
=KOFF=
YOU!
SHWAK
SHNG
KRKKSWAK
YOUUU...

art by KEVIN EASTMAN
colors by ROBBIE PATTISON

ISSUE #57

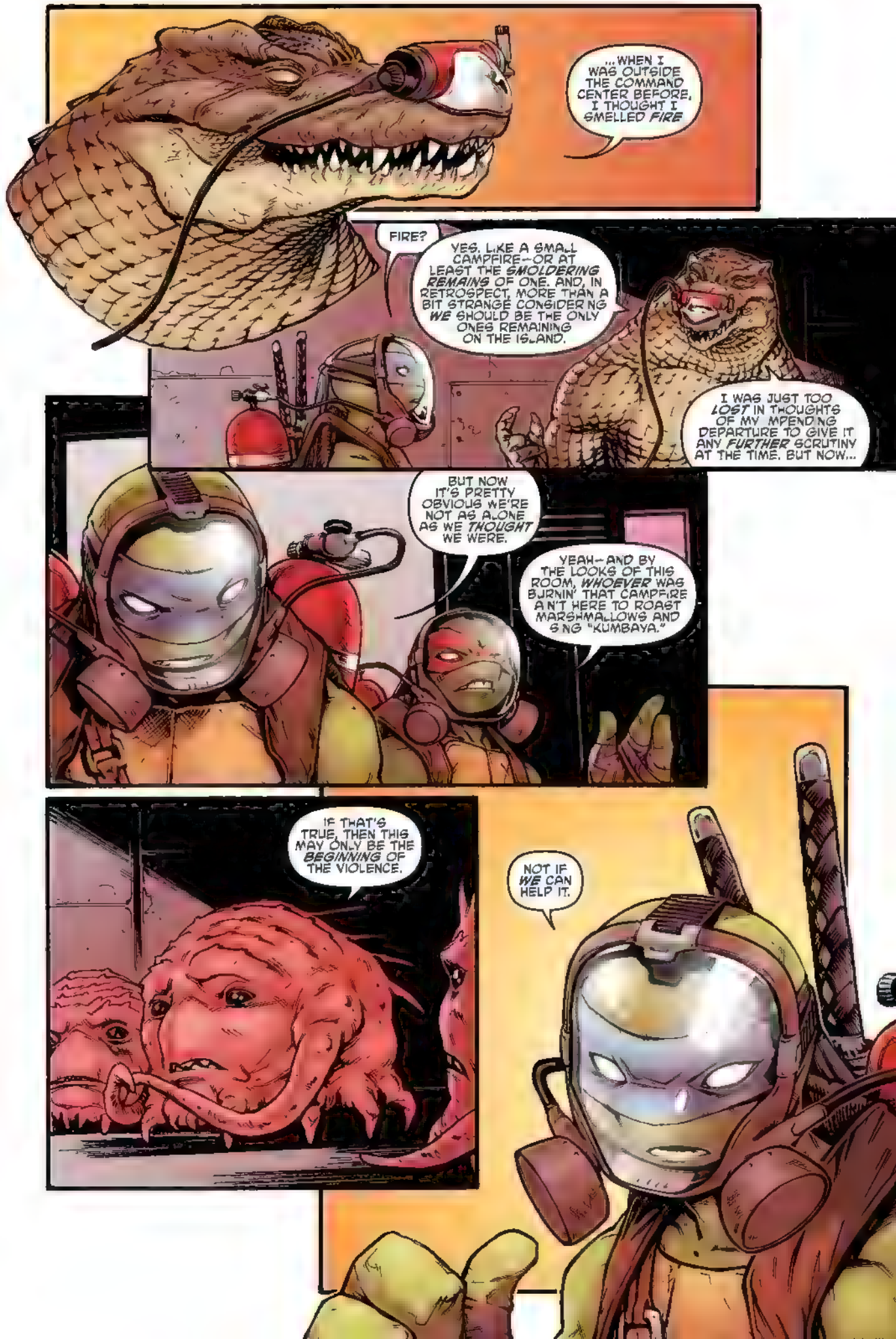
BURNOW ISLAND.
ALL THAT TIME TRAPPED IN STASIS, AND WE AWAKE TO THIS...
...HORROR?!
THIS...
...THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE.

GUYS... YAWNN... WHAT'S GOIN' ON?
I WAS TOTALLY CONKED OUT WHEN I HEARD AN ALARM OR...
.. SOMETHIN'
HRRRK!
WHOA— STEADY. DEEP BREATHS.
GET A GRIP, MIKEY, UNLESS YOU WANNA BARF INTO YOUR BREATHIN' GIZMO.
OH, MAN...
... PROFESSOR HONEYCUTT.
IS HE STILL FUNCTIONAL?
ALIVE, YOU MEAN?
I...
... I DON'T KNOW.

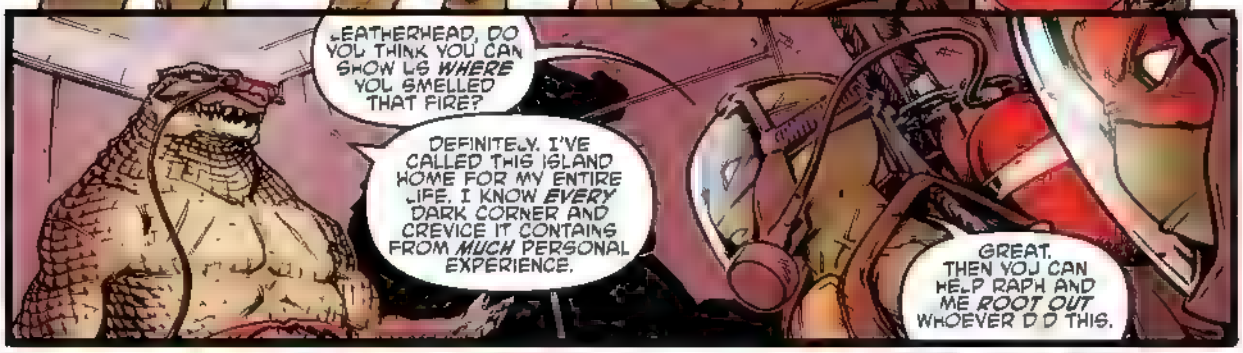

I'M CONFIDENT THERE IS A WAY TO REASSEMBLE YOUR FRAGMENTED MACHINE. OUR FALLEN COMRADES, HOWEVER...
POOR COUNCILOR LORQA.
HE'S NOT A MACHINE. HE'S A REAL PERSON... AND THE REASON YOU'RE EVEN AWAKE RIGHT NOW.
HE'S THE ONE THAT BROUGHT YOU OUT OF STASIS.
WHY? TO SEE US VICIOUSLY MURDERED?
YOU... YOU DON'T THINK WE DID THIS, DO YOU? PROFESSOR HONEYCUTT'S MY FRIEND.
YET WE ARE NOT. BUT IF YOU ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS HEINOUS ACT, WHO IS?
FURTHERMORE, WHO EXACTLY ARE YOU PEOPLE? WHERE ARE WE?
AND WHERE IS GENERAL KRANG?
OH, BOY.
YEAH, WELL, GENERAL KRANG IS, UM... UNAVAILABLE RIGHT NOW. HE HAD TO LEAVE EARTH FOR AN, UH... AN EMERGENCY, AND HE LEFT FUGITOID IN CHARGE OF BURNOW ISLAND WHILE HE'S AWAY.
EARTH?
SO HE BROUGHT US HERE AFTER ALL?*
YOU DID NOT ANSWER MY OTHER QUESTION.
WHO ARE YOU?

OH, YEAH--SORRY. THESE ARE MY BROTHERS... DONATELLO, MICHELANGELO, AND RAPHAEL.
AND BEHIND THEM IS LEATHERHEAD.
I'M LEONARDO.
STAY BACK, EARTHLING!
CALM YOURSELF, KLEVE. PARANOIA SERVES NO USEFUL PURPOSE NOW.
BUT IT COULD BE A TRAP.
HIGHLY DOUBTFUL, CONSIDERING WE WERE SECRETLY TRAPPED BEFORE ALL THIS.
I AM CHIEF SCIENCE ADVISOR MA'RIELL.
WITH ME ARE TECHNICAL SPECIALIST LEESHAWN, AS WELL AS LIEUTENANT KLEVE AND CORPORAL MONTUORO, SOLDIERS OF THE UTROM MILITARY.
OKAY, WE ALL KNOW EACH OTHER NOW. GREAT.
CAN WE GET BACK TO FIGURIN' OUT WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED HERE?
AGREED--THIS IS A TIME FOR ANSWERS, NOT PLEASANTRIES. I WISH TO SPEAK TO YOUR LEADER NOW.
YOU SAID ONE NAMED FUGITOID WAS PLACED IN CHARGE BY KRANG. WHERE CAN I FIND THIS PERSON?
WHICH PART?
THE ROBOT?
HE'S NOT JUST A ROBOT...
WELL, IT WAS NEVER THE PLAN COMING HERE, BUT I GUESS I'M IN CHARGE NOW.
THEN YOU AND I SHARE THAT RESPONSIBILITY, LEONARDO--AND IN THE SAME UNEXPECTED FASHION.
SADLY, ONE OF OUR MURDERED COMRADES WAS COUNCILOR LORQA OF THE UTROM HIGH COUNCIL...
WITH HIS DEATH, AND KRANG'S ABSENCE, IT WOULD APPEAR I AM THE SENIOR-MOST UTROM FOR THE TIME BEING.

BUT, YOUR BROTHER? SHOULDN'T WE—
PLEASE, LET ME SPEAK, MONTUORO!
DESPITE HIS RUDENESS, MY SOLDIER FRIEND DOES BRING UP A GOOD POINT— WHERE ARE THE REMAINDER OF THE UTROMS?
I WAS THE ONE WHO STUMBLED UPON THIS CARNAGE.
I WAS OUT TAKING IN THE ISLAND'S SIGHTS ONE LAST TIME FOR NOSTALGIA'S SAKE— A FINAL FAREWELL BEFORE LEAVING IT BEHIND FOR GOOD.
THAT'S WHEN I SOUNDED THE ALARM TO ALERT THE TURTLES AND ACTIVATED THE LOCKDOWN SEQUENCE ON THE UTROM RECOVERY PODS.
I DIDN'T WANT WHAT HAPPENED HERE TO REPEAT ITSELF ON THE OTHERS.
AND WHEN I RETURNED TO THE COMMAND CENTER, I DISCOVERED THE POOR PROFESSOR AND THE UTROMS IN THIS AWFUL STATE.
THERE IS ONE OTHER THING, HOWEVER...
LOCKED IN THEIR QUARTERS.


...WHEN I WAS OUTSIDE THE COMMAND CENTER BEFORE, I THOUGHT I SMELLED *FIRE*
FIRE?
YES. LIKE A SMALL CAMPFIRE--OR AT LEAST THE *SMOLDERING REMAINS* OF ONE. AND, IN RETROSPECT, MORE THAN A BIT STRANGE CONSIDERING *WE* SHOULD BE THE ONLY ONES REMAINING ON THE ISLAND.
I WAS JUST TOO *LOST* IN THOUGHTS OF MY IMPENDING DEPARTURE TO GIVE IT ANY *FURTHER* SCRUTINY AT THE TIME. BUT NOW...
BUT NOW IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS WE'RE NOT AS ALONE AS WE *THOUGHT* WE WERE.
YEAH--AND BY THE LOOKS OF THIS ROOM, *WHOEVER* WAS BURNIN' THAT CAMPFIRE AIN'T HERE TO ROAST MARSHMALLOWS AND SING "KUMBAYA."
IF THAT'S TRUE, THEN THIS MAY ONLY BE THE *BEGINNING* OF THE VIOLENCE.
NOT IF *WE* CAN HELP IT.

ALL RIGHT, LISTEN JP. THINGS HAVE OBVIOUSLY TAKEN A BAD TURN, SO WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO TAKE SOME ACTION TO GET THINGS BACK UNDER CONTROL.
DONNIE, STAY HERE AND SEE IF YOU CAN FIX FUGITOID. HE KNOWS MORE ABOUT THIS ISLAND THAN ALL OF US AND WE MIGHT NEED HIS HELP BEFORE THIS IS OVER. PROBABLY A GOOD IDEA TO MAKE SURE EVERYTHING'S GOOD WITH THE TELEPORTER WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, TOO.
ROGER.
MIKEY, WATCH DONNIE'S BACK WHILE HE WORKS AND KEEP AN EYE ON THE STROMS--I DON'T WANT ANYONE ELSE GETTING KILLED.
YOU GOT IT, BIG BRO.


LEATHERHEAD, DO YOU THINK YOU CAN SHOW US WHERE YOU SMELLED THAT FIRE?
DEFINITELY. I'VE CALLED THIS ISLAND HOME FOR MY ENTIRE LIFE. I KNOW EVERY DARK CORNER AND CREVICE IT CONTAINS FROM MUCH PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.
GREAT. THEN YOU CAN HELP RAPH AND ME ROOT OUT WHOEVER DID THIS.

WE'RE REALLY SORRY THIS HAPPENED AND WE'RE GONNA DO WHATEVER WE CAN TO STOP IT.
AND YOU HAVE OUR GRATITUDE. BUT, BEFORE YOU GO, WHAT OF OUR COMRADES WHO REMAIN CONFINED?
IT IS WRONG FOR US TO KEEP THEM OBLIVIOUS TO WHAT HAS HAPPENED, DON'T YOU THINK?

WELL, EVEN THOUGH IT'S PROBABLY BEST FOR YOUR PEOPLE TO STAY HUNKERED DOWN IN THEIR ROOMS, THIS ISN'T A PRISON AND THERE IS SOMETHING TO BE SAID FOR SAFETY IN NUMBERS.
YOUR CALL.

C'MON, RAPH AND LEATHERHEAD...

"... TIME TO HUNT"
THIS WAY– UP AHEAD. THIS TUNNEL RUNS UNDER THE TECHNODROME TO AN OUTLET THAT LEADS TO A NATURAL CAVE NETWORK TOWARD THE EDGE OF THE ISLAND
THAT'S WHERE I CAUGHT SCENT OF THE FIRE
THIS IS A LOT BIGGER THAN I WAS EXPECTING
A LOT FREAKIN' CREEPIER, TOO. NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE MISSIN' THE SEWERS BACK HOME.
JUST KEEP YOUR EYES AND EARS OPEN. THIS IS LIKE AN ENDLESS SERIES OF HIDING PLAC
GYAH!
FZAK
WHO THE–
INTRUDERS!
HALT OR BE DESTROYED!
CRAP. IS THAT ONE OF STOCKMAN'S MOUSER THINGS?
YES. THESE ROBOTS FUNCTIONED AS SECURITY FOR KRANG.
I THOUGHT I'D DISABLED THEM ALL.
CASEY AND ME TOOK ONE OF THESE RUST BUCKETS DOWN BY OURSELVES ONCE. WE GOT THIS.
YEAH. A TANDEM ATTACK– ONE LOW, ONE HIGH.
NO NEED, LEONARDO.
I KNOW FULL WELL HOW TO HANDLE THESE MACHINES!
GO NO FARTH
STOP!
S-S-STOP B-BEFORE...
BEFORE WHAT, MACHINE?

YES, WE... SHALL WE CONTINUE?
SKKZLKK
REMIND ME TO NEVER CHALLENGE THAT GUY TO A WRESTLIN' MATCH.
YEAH.

OKAY, I THNK WE'RE READY...
...WHAT DO YOU THINK, MA'RIELL?
YES, I BELIEVE ALL IS IN PLACE, DONATELLO. LET'S FIND OUT IF YOUR FRIEND STILL EXISTS INSIDE THERE.
TECHN CIAN LEESHAWN...
...YOU MAY COMMENCE
YES, MA'AM.
HMMMM
OH PLEASE OH PLEASE OH PLEASE..
HMMMM
HMMMM
IT WORKED!

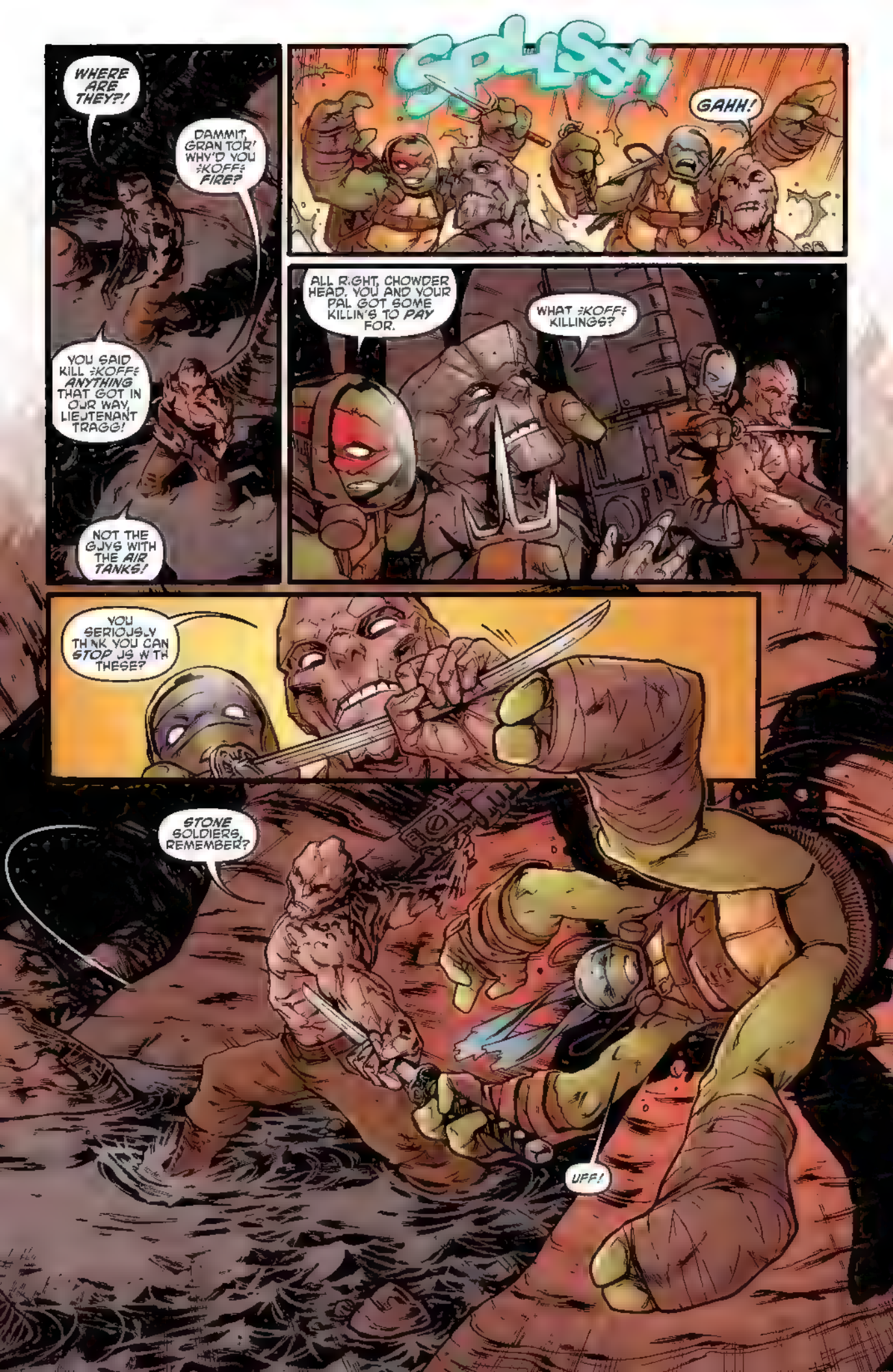
IT WORKED, RIGHT?
PROFESSOR— IT'S DONATELLO. CAN YOU HEAR ME?
PROFESSOR?
LEESHAWN, PLEASE DEACTIVATE THE MACHINE.
IS HE OKAY, DONNIE?
I... I DON'T KNOW, MIKEY. HE'S NOT ANSWERING.
AND HE WILL NOT...
...AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING ACCORDING TO THESE LIFE FORCE READINGS.
DID WE... FAIL?
NO—WE WERE QUITE SUCCESSFUL. YOUR FRIEND IS VERY MUCH ALIVE, ALTHOUGH CONSCIOUSNESS ELUDES HIM AT THE MOMENT.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I MEAN, HE LIVES, BUT HE REMAINS COMATOSE.
FOR HOW LONG?
THAT...
...I DO NOT KNOW.

BUT TAKE HEART, DONATELLO. YOU DID NOT LOSE YOUR FRIEND TO THE MURDERER AS WE DID.
HE MAY BE SLEEPING, BUT HE LIVES. AND WHERE THERE'S LIFE, THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE.
NO, YOU'RE RIGHT, MA'RIELL—THANKS. I'M SURE WITH MY FRIEND HAROLD'S HELP, WE CAN GET THE PROFESSOR BACK TO NORMAL WHEN WE GO HOME.
COMPARED TO WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR FRIENDS, THIS IS GOOD NEWS.
YES. AND NOW THAT WE HAVE THE ROBOT'S SITUATION TAKEN CARE OF, IT'S TIME TO TURN OUR ATTENTION TO RELEASING THE UTROMS STILL LOCKED UP.
CORPORAL MONTUORO'S RIGHT.
AND I'D ALSO LIKE SOMEONE TO EXPLAIN TO ME WHY ADVISOR MA'RELL'S BROTHER REMAINS IN STASIS.
WHY EXACTLY HASN'T COLONEL CH'RELL BEEN AWAKENED?

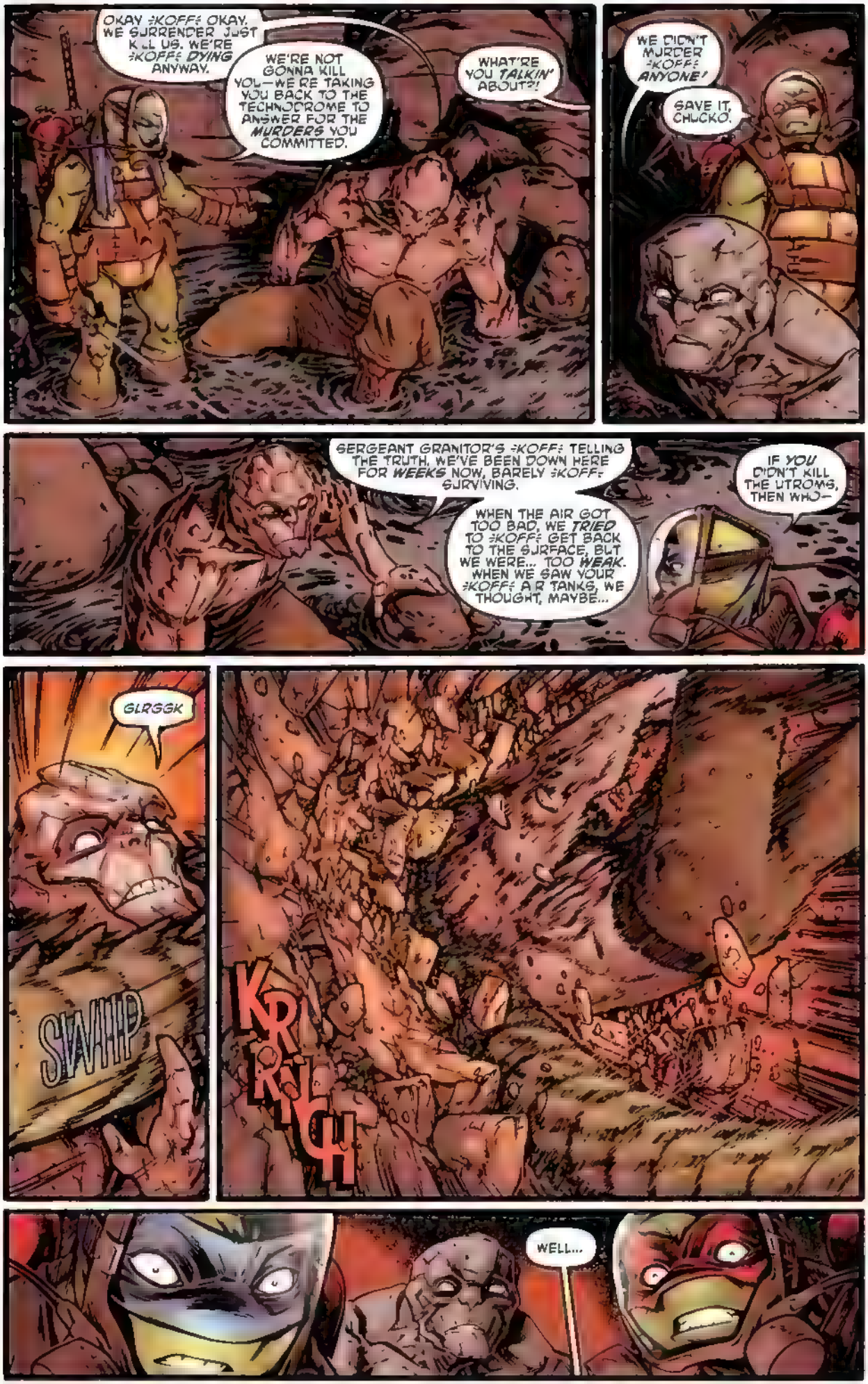
WE ARE NEARING THE *END*, MY FRIENDS. NOT MUCH FARTHER NOW.
THANK GOD.
ARE YOU *SURE*? WE'VE COME PRETTY FAR ALREADY AND THIS WATER IS ONLY GETTING DEEPER.
YES... IT *IS*.
BUT DON'T BE AFRAID. THESE WATERS HAVE SERVED TO *CONCEAL* ME FROM THOSE WHO WOULD DO ME HARM FOR MORE THAN 200 YEARS.
I KNOW THEM WELL.
HARM?
WHAT *KIND* OF HARM?
THE KIND THAT LEADS TO DEATH.
OR *WORSE*.
I HAVE AN *ADMISSION* TO MAKE—MY TIME ON THIS ISLAND HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN AS *PRISTINE* AS I'VE LED YOU TO BELIEVE.
THE TRUTH IS, MY LIFE HAS BEEN *RIFE* WITH DIABOLICAL HORRORS.
OR MORE PRECISELY, MY *SECOND* LIFE.

IN MY BESTIAL FORM... MY PURE FORM... I WAS A PREDATOR BY NATURE, HUNTING SIMPLY TO SURVIVE.
BUT ONCE I WAS TRANSFORMED AND BECAME MORE SENTIENT—MORE HUMAN, YOU MIGHT SAY—I QUICKLY FOUND MYSELF ON THE OPPOSITE END OF THAT SPECTRUM.
PREY INSTEAD OF PREDATOR.
A MONSTER HUNTED BY MONSTERS.
INSTINCTUALLY, I DID ALL IN MY POWER TO SURVIVE—TO PERSEVERE. BUT IRONICALLY I COMPREHENDED MY PURSUERS' DESIRE TO SEE ME CONTAINED.
MOTHER NATURE HAS HER LAWS, AFTER ALL, AND MONSTROSITIES SHOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED TO EXIST WITHIN HER PERFECT PLAN
OKAYYYY...
UH... I THINK IT'S TIME TO GO IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION NOW, LEATHERHEAD. ANY FARTHER AND WE'LL BE IN OVER OUR HEADS.
TOO LATE FOR THAT, MUTANT...
...YOU'D ALREADY BE DEAD IF WE WEREN'T WORRIED ABOUT DAMAGING THOSE BREATHING TANKS.
HAND... *KOFF*... HAND 'EM OVER.
MONSTERS
SPLOSH

SO MUCH FOR THE HEAVYWE GHT CHAMP.
FORGET HIM, RAPH— AT LEAST HE HELPED US F ND THE KILLERS...
...OUR OLD FRIENDS TRAGG AND GRANITOR.
WE'RE NOT YOUR :KOFF: FRIENDS, AND THERE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ANY :KOFF: KILLING, TURTLE. JUST GIVE US THAT OXYGEN AND WE'LL :KOFF: LET YOU GO
HURRY!
FORGET IT. WE'RE GOOD AS DEAD WITHOUT THE BREATHING DEVICES.
UTROMS AND FUGITOID... WHAT?
WHO CARES?!
YEAH—YOU CHUMPS GIVE THOSE UTROMS AND FUGITOID THE SAME LINE OF CRAP BEFORE YOU WASTED THEM?
WE NEED THAT AIR!
FZZK
GO DARK, RAPH!
WAY AHEAD OF YOU!


WHERE ARE THEY?!
DAMMIT, GRAN TOR! WHY'D YOU =KOFF= FIRE?
YOU SAID KILL =KOFF= ANYTHING THAT GOT IN OUR WAY, LIEJTENANT TRAGG!
NOT THE GJYS WITH THE AIR TANKS!
SPLISH
GAHH!
ALL R.GHT, CHOWDER HEAD. YOU AND YOUR PAL GOT SOME KILLIN'S TO PAY FOR.
WHAT =KOFF= KILLINGS?
YOU SERIOJSLY TH NK YOU CAN STOP JS W TH THESE?
STONE SOLDIERS, REMEMBER?
UFF!

KRAK
STAND CLEAR, GRANITOR!
NO!
HRNF!
WHOMP
STONE SK N OR NOT...
FWAP
...I'M GUESSIN' WE CAN STILL SCRAMBLE THOSE ROCKS YOU CALL BRAINS.
CHAK
AND I'LL BET THOSE PUPILS ARE PLENTY SOFT, TOO.


OKAY ⁑KOFF⁑ OKAY. WE SURRENDER JUST KILL US. WE'RE ⁑KOFF⁑ DYING ANYWAY.
WE'RE NOT GONNA KILL YOU—WE'RE TAKING YOU BACK TO THE TECHNODROME TO ANSWER FOR THE MURDERS YOU COMMITTED.
WHAT'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT?!
WE DIDN'T MURDER ⁑KOFF⁑ ANYONE!
SAVE IT, CHUCKO.
SERGEANT GRANITOR'S ⁑KOFF⁑ TELLING THE TRUTH. WE'VE BEEN DOWN HERE FOR WEEKS NOW, BARELY ⁑KOFF⁑ SURVIVING.
WHEN THE AIR GOT TOO BAD, WE TRIED TO ⁑KOFF⁑ GET BACK TO THE SURFACE, BUT WE WERE... TOO WEAK. WHEN WE SAW YOUR ⁑KOFF⁑ AIR TANKS, WE THOUGHT, MAYBE...
IF YOU DIDN'T KILL THE UTROMS, THEN WHO—
GLRGGK
SWIIP
KRRRICH
WELL...

...IT APPEARS I HAVE ANOTHER ADMISSION TO MAKE.

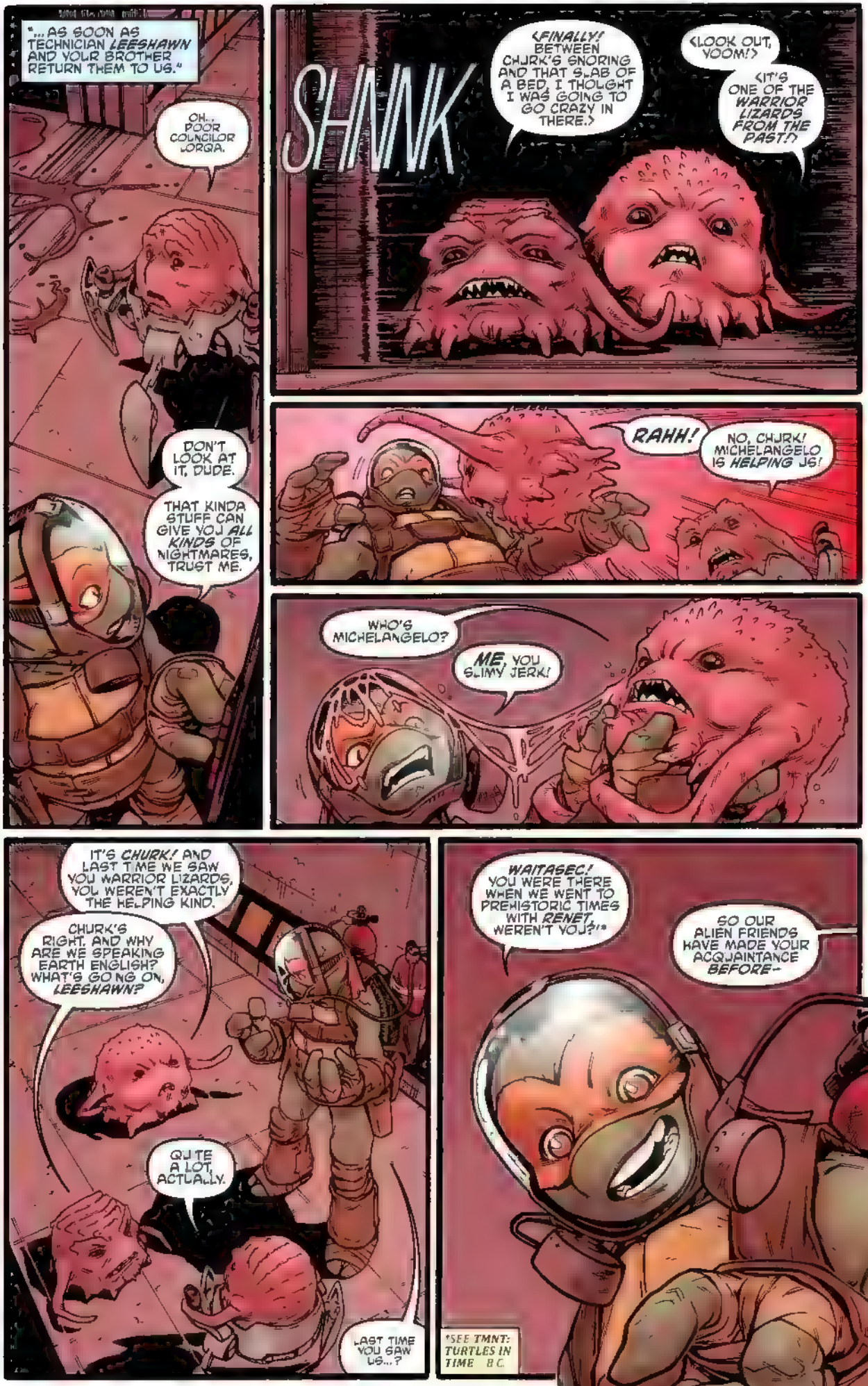
CORY SMITH

art by MATEUS SANTOLOUCO

ISSUE #58

GUILTY OF WAR CRIMES?!
ON WHOSE ACCOUNT?
HEY, DON'T SHOOT THE MESSENGER. I'M ONLY TELLING YOU WHAT PROFESSOR HONEYCUTT TOLD ME BEFORE WE BROUGHT THE REST OF YOU OUT OF STASIS.
HONEYCUTT? THE ROBOT?
YES.
WHAT RIGHT DOES A MACHINE HAVE TO PASS JUDGMENT ON AN UTROMINON WAR HERO?!
NO RIGHT, SIR! NO RIGHT AT ALL!
UM... CAN I TALK TO YOU PRIVATELY FOR A MOMENT, MA'RIELL? I MIGHT BE ABLE TO CLEAR A FEW THINGS UP WITHOUT ALL THE SHOUTING.
VERY WELL.
LIEUTENANT KLEVE—PLEASE REMAIN WITH MY BROTHER WHILE I SPEAK FURTHER WITH DONATELLO ABOUT THIS MATTER.
THANK YOU.
IT APPEARS, CORPORAL MONTUORO, THAT CIVILIANS REMAIN THE SAME IN ANY DIMENSION—BLEEDING-HEARTED WEAKLINGS. COLONEL CH'RELL A WAR CRIMINAL?
PREPOSTEROUS!
SIR, YES, SIR.

LOOK—THERE'S SOMETHING IMPORTANT YOU SHOULD KNOW, AND I WAS HOPING I COULD SHARE IT WITH YOU IN A RATIONAL FASHION, SCIENTIST TO SCIENTIST. NO OFFENSE, BUT YOUR SOLDIER FRIENDS ARE A LITTLE...
OVER-EXUBERANT?
I WAS GONNA SAY "TOO LOUD," BUT, YEAH, THEY'RE PROBABLY TOO WORKED UP RIGHT NOW FOR WHAT I HAVE TO TELL YOU.
I AM LISTENING.
OKAY... THE REASON YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS ARE ABLE TO LIVE AND BREATHE RIGHT NOW IS BECAUSE, NOT TOO LONG AGO, GENERAL KRANG TRIED TO TERRAFORM EARTH IN ORDER TO CREATE A NEW UTROMINON.
MY BROTHERS AND I—WITH PROFESSOR HONEYCUTT'S HELP—WERE ABLE TO STOP HIM BEFORE HE COMMITTED GLOBAL GENOCIDE...
...BUT NOT BEFORE HE TRANSFORMED THIS ISLAND INTO AN ENVIRONMENT ONLY SURVIVABLE TO UTROMS.
AND GENERAL KRANG?
IN PRISON IN DIMENSION X.
HE WAS ALREADY WANTED FOR WAR CRIMES ON PLANET NEUTRINO, SO THE PROFESSOR THOUGHT IT BEST HE STAND TRIAL THERE, WHICH WAS FINE WITH US—WE JUST WANTED HIM AS FAR AWAY AS POSSIBLE.
IT WASN'T UNTIL WE WERE BRINGING THE REST OF YOU OUT OF STASIS THAT THE PROFESSOR TOLD US YOUR BROTHER WAS GUILTY OF WAR CRIMES, TOO.
THING IS, HE DIDN'T TELL US WHAT THEY WERE—JUST THAT HE WANTED TO TALK TO YOU AND THE OTHERS ABOUT IT FIRST.
AND... WELL, YOU KNOW THE REST.
GENOCIDE?
AH, KRANG... SO VERY LIKE YOUR FATHER AFTER ALL...
YES, WELL... WHEREAS KLEVE AND MONTUORO TEND TO BE BOISTEROUS IN THEIR SOLDIERLY DEVOTION, CH'RELL IS THE EPITOME OF A TRUE ZEALOT, LOYAL TO A FAULT.
I HAVE NO DOUBT HE WOULD HAVE REACTED WITH EXTREME DISPLEASURE AT THE NEWS HIS BELOVED LEADER HAS BEEN IMPRISONED.
AS SAD AS IT IS FOR ME TO ADMIT, YOUR ROBOT FRIEND WAS WISE TO BE CAUTIOUS WITH MY BROTHER.
THIS IS MOST DEFINITELY A SITUATION I MUST DISCUSS WITH MY FELLOW UTROMS...


"...AS SOON AS TECHNICIAN LEESHAWN AND YOUR BROTHER RETURN THEM TO US."
OH... POOR COUNCILOR LORGA.
DON'T LOOK AT IT, DUDE.
THAT KINDA STUFF CAN GIVE YOU ALL KINDS OF NIGHTMARES, TRUST ME.
SHNNK
<FINALLY! BETWEEN CHURK'S SNORING AND THAT SLAB OF A BED, I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO GO CRAZY IN THERE.>
<LOOK OUT, YOOM!>
<IT'S ONE OF THE WARRIOR LIZARDS FROM THE PAST!>
RAHH!
NO, CHURK! MICHELANGELO IS HELPING US!
WHO'S MICHELANGELO?
ME, YOU SLIMY JERK!
IT'S CHURK! AND LAST TIME WE SAW YOU WARRIOR LIZARDS, YOU WEREN'T EXACTLY THE HELPING KIND.
CHURK'S RIGHT. AND WHY ARE WE SPEAKING EARTH ENGLISH? WHAT'S GOING ON, LEESHAWN?
QUITE A LOT, ACTUALLY.
LAST TIME YOU SAW US...?
WAITASEC! YOU WERE THERE WHEN WE WENT TO PREHISTORIC TIMES WITH RENET, WEREN'T YOU?!*
SO OUR ALIEN FRIENDS HAVE MADE YOUR ACQUAINTANCE BEFORE--
*SEE TMNT: TURTLES IN TIME B.C.

—HOW WONDERFULLY SERENDIPITOUS.
LEATHERHEAD!
THIS WARRIOR LIZARD'S BIGGER
I'LL HAPPILY LET SOMEONE ELSE JUMP ON THAT ONE'S FACE.
WISE DECISION, CHURK. WISE DECISION.
DUDE... WHAT HAPPENED?
IT'S RATHER EMBARRASSING, REALLY. I WAS SEARCHING WITH YOUR BROTHERS AND SEEMED TO HAVE BLOODIED MYSELF IN THE DARK.
SO RIDICULOUSLY CLUMSY OF ME— I KNOW THOSE TUNNELS INTIMATELY, AFTER ALL.
ANYWAY, I DECIDED TO RETURN IN ORDER TO CLEAN UP AFTER MYSELF. YOUR BROTHERS ARE WAITING FOR YOU TO JOIN THEM IN THE TUNNELS, IN THE MEANTIME.
ME? WHY?
SAFETY IN NUMBERS, I SUPPOSE. I TOLD THEM I WOULD TAKE CHARGE OF WATCHING OVER THE UTROMS WHILE YOU WERE AWAY.
BUT... HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO FIND THEM?
THE BLOOD TRAIL I LEFT BEHIND SHOULD GUIDE YOUR WAY JUST FINE.
UH, YEAH... THAT'S NOT TOO NASTY.
IF YOU ONLY KNEW, MY FRIEND.

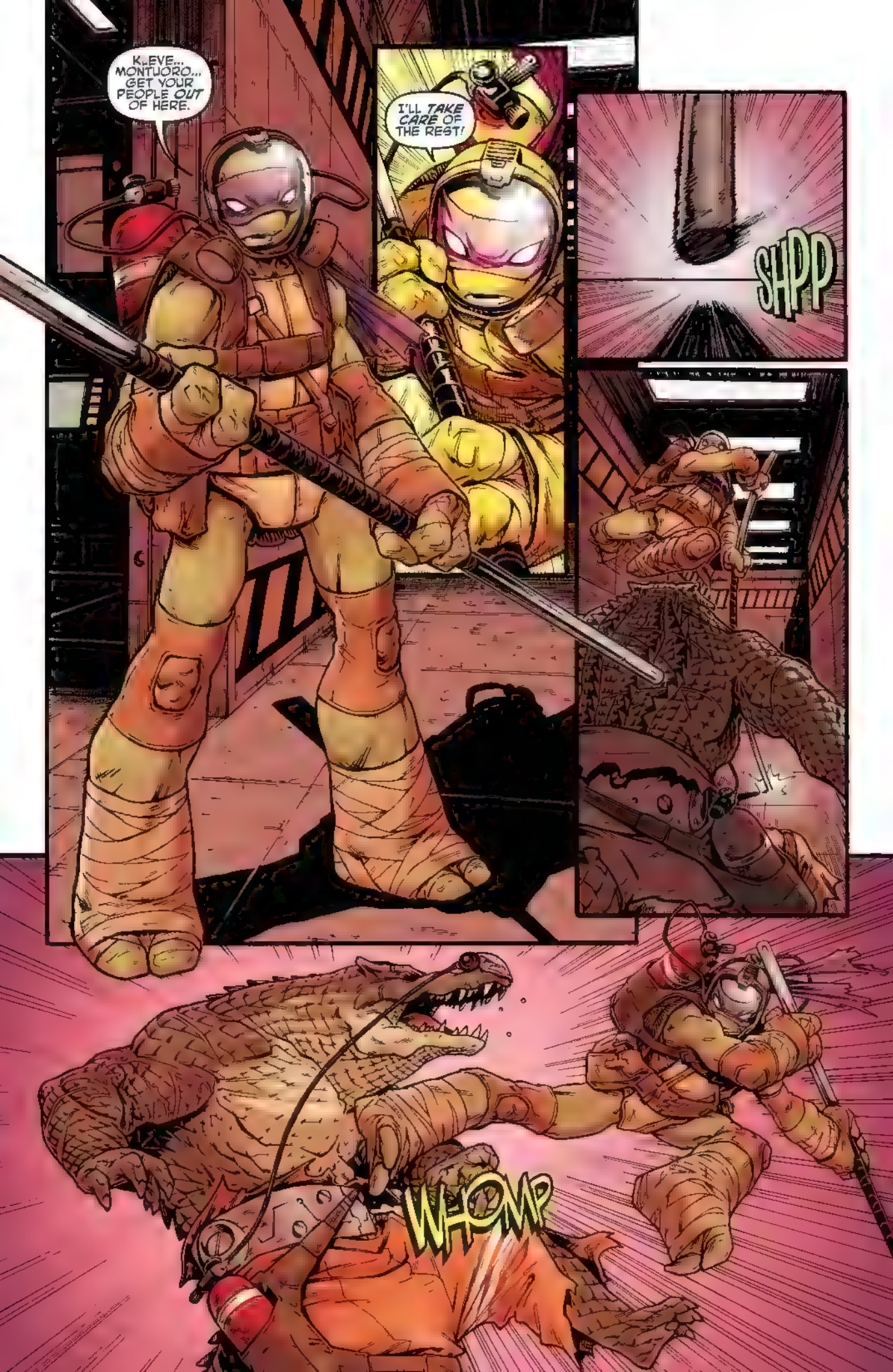
HEY, DONNIE!
CRIPES, MIKE!
YOU ABOUT GAVE ME A CORONARY.
WHERE ARE THE OTHERS?
THEY'RE WITH LEATHERHEAD.
HE GOT HURT AND CAME BACK AND NOW I GOTTA GO FIND LEO AND RAPH WITH HIS BLOOD.
HIS BLOOD? WHAT ARE YOU TALK-
NO TIME - GOTTA BOLT! JUST WANTED TO KEEP YOU IN THE LOOP, BRO.
WA T, MIKE, I-
DID HE SAY LEATHERHEAD WAS HURT?
LEATHERHEAD... HURT...
PROFESSOR! IT'S DONNIE! CAN YOU HEAR ME?
DON... NEE... LISTEN CARE . FULLY. IT WAS... LEATHERHEAD...
.. HURT ME.

HOLY MOLEY- LEATHERHEAD MUST BE THE BIGGEST KLUTZ EVER
..LOOK AT ALL THIS..
.. BLOOD
OH.. MAN.
NNNGG...
MIKEY, THAT YOU?
DIDN'T HAPPEN TO BRING SOME ASPIRIN, DIDJA?
GUYS! WHAT HAPPENED?!
GOT OUR GREEN BUTTS HANDED TO US, THAT'S WHAT.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, MIKEY? YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE GUARDING THE UTROMS
NO WORRIES, BRO. LEATHERHEAD'S HANDLING THAT—
—HE'S THE ONE WHO TOLD ME WHERE TO FIND YOU GUYS.
WHAT ABOUT DONNIE, MIKE?
STILL WORKIN' WITH MA'RIELL. WHY?
DAMMIT.
YOU TURTLES #KOFF#. GOT YOURSELF INTO SOME SERIOUS TROUBLE
SHUT IT, CHUMP! YOU WERE TRYIN' TO WASTE US FIRST, SO YOU AIN'T GOT NO ROOM TO TALK.
MAYBE BUT #KOFF# WE WERE JUST TRYING TO.. SURVIVE.
WE ONLY WANTED #KOFF#.. YOUR AIR.
THAT BIG LIZARD WANTS.. REVENGE.

DUDES... I'M SO CONFUSED RIGHT NOW.
LEATHERHEAD, MIKE—HE'S THE ONE THAT ATTACKED US. SMACKED US AROUND PRETTY GOOD BEFORE WE COULD REACT THEN TOOK OFF ALL OF A SUDDEN.
AND I WANNA KNOW WHY—BUT NOT HERE. WE GOTTA GET BACK TO DONNIE, FAST.
MIKE... RAPH... GRAB TRAGG. I'LL HELP GRANITOR.
WHAT FOR? THESE ROCK DORKS'... JUST SLOW US DOWN.
BECAUSE WE DON'T LEAVE ANYONE TO D.E IF WE CAN HELP IT, RAPH. EVER.
MAN, THIS GUY... ERF... WEIGHS A TON.
TE... ME... NNG... 'BOUT IT.
SO WHY'S LEATHERHEAD WANT REVENGE?
WHY? GENERAL KRANG ŧKOFFŧ... THAT'S WHY.
GOES WAY BACK. I DON'T KNOW ALL THE DETAILS, BUT ENOUGH TO KNOW ŧKOFFŧ... THIS IS BAD.
"STARTED WHEN A BUNCH OF PIRATES DUMPED A LOAD OF KRANG'S MUTAGEN AND OOZE INTO ONE OF BURNOW'S INLETS. ENOUGH TO ŧKOFFŧ... CHANGE OUR ALLIGATOR FRIEND.
"THE GENERAL EVENTUALLY WENT LOOK N' FOR HIS LOST GOODS... AND ENDED UP ŧKOFFŧ... SNAGGIN' HIMSELF A NEW PET INSTEAD."

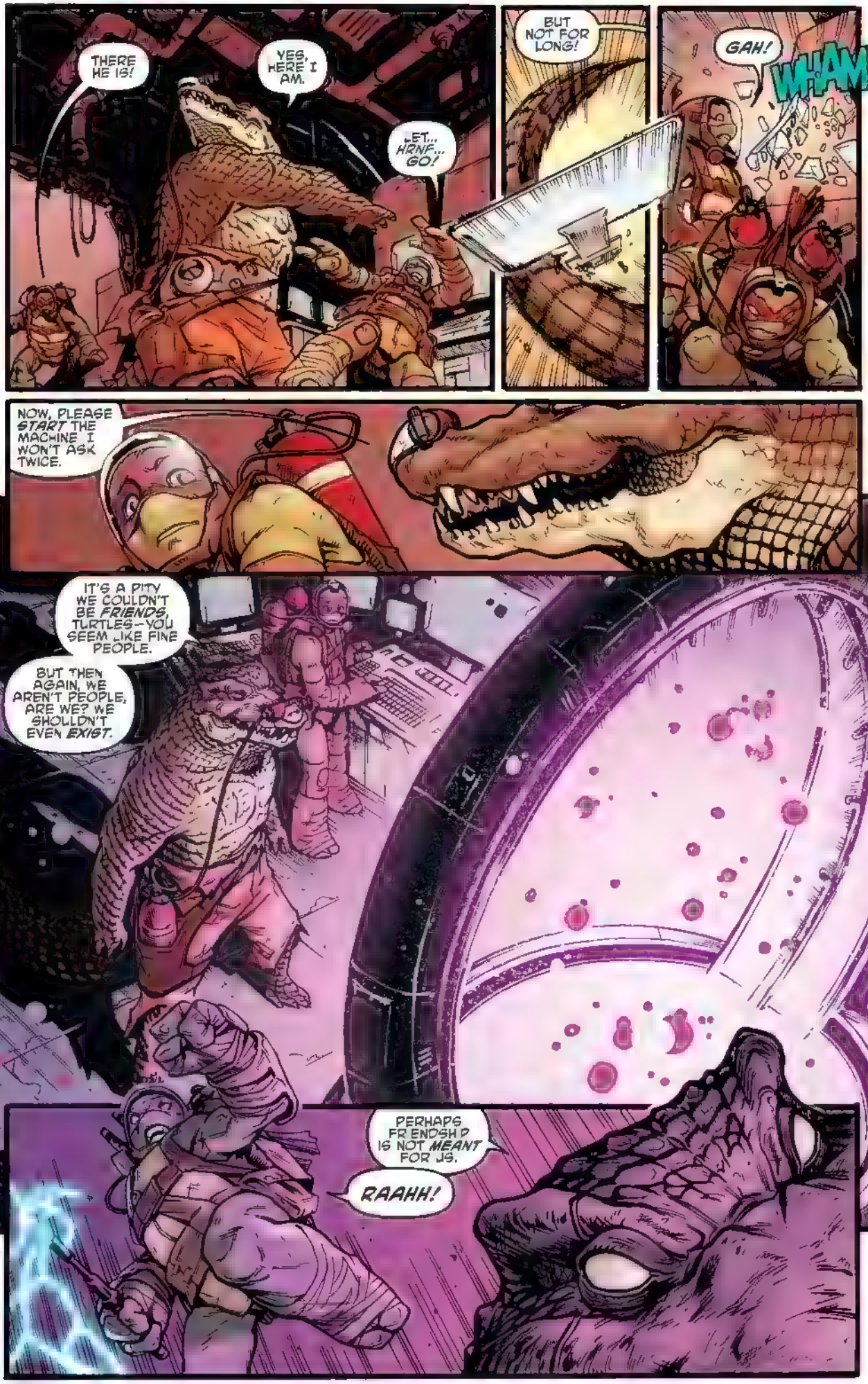
"KRANG KEPT THE BEAST LOCKED UP IN ONE OF HIS LABS. LET THE SCIENTISTS RUN ALL SORT OF TESTS ON IT, NOT ALL OF 'EM SKOFF... NICE ONES, EITHER.
"THE BIG LIZARD HATED IT BEING TRAPPED LIKE THAT. EVEN GOT OUT A FEW TIMES, BUT IT NEVER LASTED LONG. HE WASN'T GOING ANYWHERE.
"NAH—THE GENERAL HAD BIG SKOFF... PLANS FOR HIM.
"TURNS OUT THE GENERAL WANTED TO TAKE OVER EARTH WITH AN ARMY OF SMART MUTANTS, AND OL' LEATHERHEAD WAS HIS FIRST SKOFF... RECRUIT.
"GOT A LOT OF SPECIAL ATTENTION FOR A LONG TIME AS A RESULT. AND IF THINGS WERE GOING GOOD FOR KRANG, THINGS WENT GOOD FOR THE MUTANT, TOO.
"AND WHEN THINGS WERE BAD, WELL... THE GENERAL HAD HIS PET TO TAKE IT OUT ON.
"EVENTUALLY THE GENERAL GAVE UP ON SKOFF... THE MUTANT ARMY AND STARTED FOCUSING ON THE TECHNODROME. LEFT LEATHERHEAD TO ROT IN HIS CELL... WISHING FOR PAYBACK ALL THAT TIME, I'LL BET."
HE MUST'VE ESCAPED WHEN THE FOOT ATTACKED THE ISLAND, AND I FIGURE KILLING ONE UTROM'S JUST AS GOOD AS ANOTHER FOR HIM AT SKOFF... THIS POINT.
ANOTHER MUTANT GETTIN' HURT FOR NO GOOD REASON—JUST LIKE OLD HOB SAID.
SO LEATHERHEAD'S STORY WAS ALL A LIE.
HE WAS REALLY BEING TORTURED ALL THAT TIME.
YEAH, AND IF THERE'S ONE THING I CAN'T STAND MORE THAN HOB...

"...IT'S WHEN THAT STINKIN' FLEABAG IS RIGHT."
DISCONCERTING, ISN'T IT?
ONE MOMENT YOU'RE SUBLIMELY OBLIVIOUS TO THE HARSH REALITIES OF THIS WORLD— ASLEEP, AS IT WERE—
—AND THE NEXT, THOSE SAME REALITIES ARE THRUST INTO YOUR EXISTENCE WITHOUT WARNING... WITHOUT CHOICE.
YOU SUDDENLY FIND YOURSELF AN ALIEN ON AN ALIEN WORLD.
I KNOW THAT FEELING ALL TOO WELL... OF NOT BELONGING. OF BEING AN OUTSIDER.
AN ABOMINATION.
I AM FULLY AWARE A THING LIKE ME SHOULD NOT EXIST. I HAVE NO PLACE ON THIS EARTH—NOT AS I AM NOW.
AND NEITHER DO YOU. THOUGH, UNLIKE ME, YOUR KIND HAS PURPOSEFULLY MADE YOURSELVES STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND, DELIBERATELY UPSETTING A NATURAL BALANCE THAT MUST BE REESTABLISHED
UM, YES... WELL, PERHAPS WE CAN START MAKING OURSELVES MORE WELCOME BY HELPING YOU WITH YOUR WOUNDS, HM?
OH... THIS?
I NEVER SAID IT WAS MY BLOOD.
STOP, LEATHERHEAD!


K.EVE... MONTJORO... GET YOUR PEOPLE OUT OF HERE.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE REST!
SHPP
WHOMP

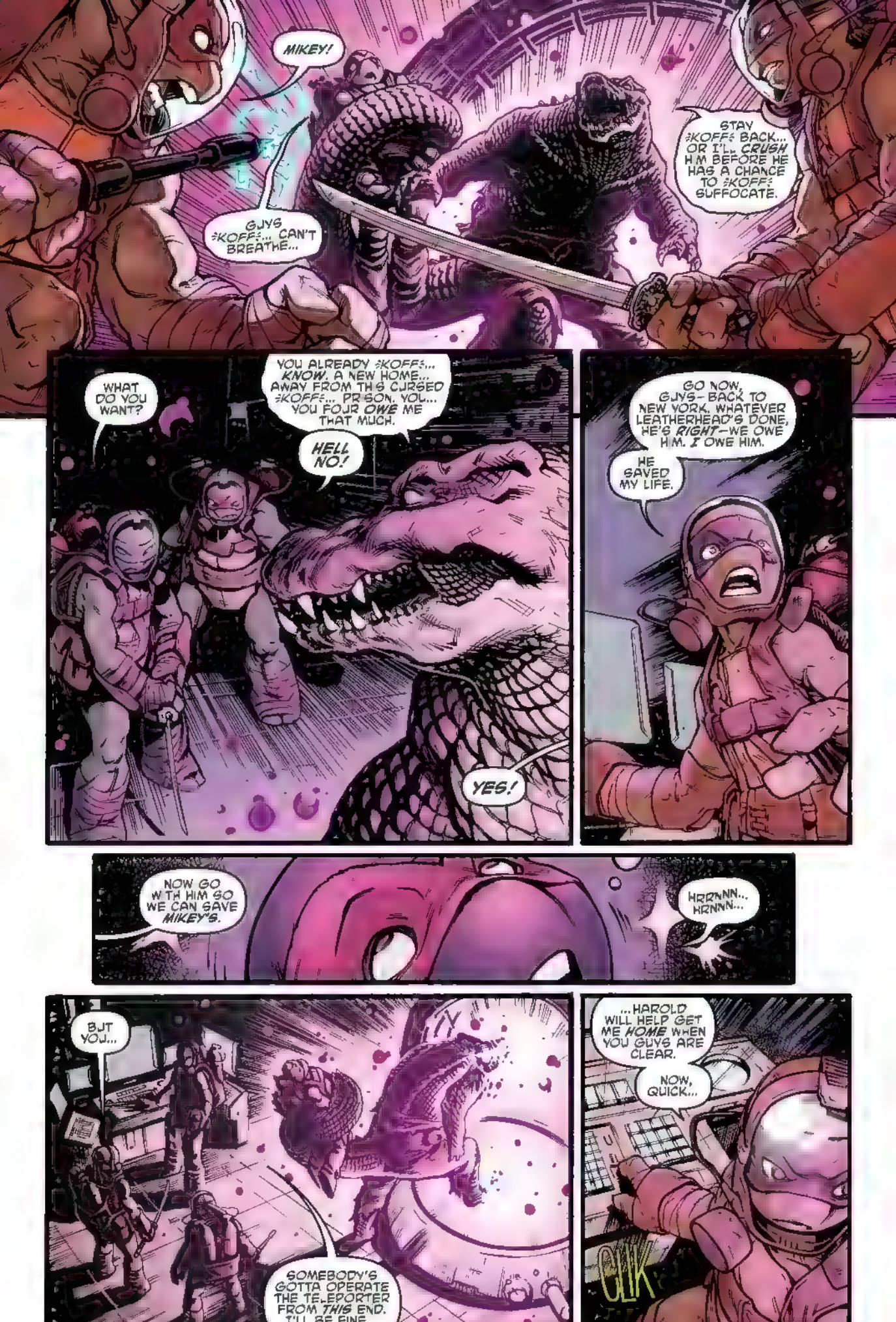
QUICKLY, YOU THREE!
GO!
I KNOW YOU'RE THE KILLER, LEATHERHEAD.
STAY DOWN—I MEAN IT.
OF COURSE I'LL STAY DOWN.
I'M A MONSTER...
...DOWN IS ALL I'VE EVER KNOWN!
OH...
CRAAAPP!
LOOK OUT!
MOVE! MOVE!
FWAMM
I SIMPLY INTEND TO PULL THE REST OF YOU MONSTERS DOWN WITH ME.

GYAAH!
ZXXXZZT
STOP, LEATHERHEAD. WE KNOW WHAT KRANG DID TO YOU. THIS DOESN'T HAVE TO GET UGLY.
YEAH, DUDE—JUST CHILL. WE DON'T WANNA HURT YOU.
SO DON'T MAKE US.
UGLY?
THIS TURNED UGLY CENTURIES AGO!
BUT NOW IT APPEARS IT'S TIME TO PUT THE UGLINESS BEHIND ME A BIT EARLIER THAN EXPECTED.
AND I'LL NEED YOUR HELP FOR THAT... SCIENTIST.
WHA—GAH!
HE'S HEADING TO THE TELEPORTER!
CRAP!
WE GOTTA SAVE DONNIE!


THERE HE IS!
YES, HERE I AM.
LET... HRNF... GO!
BUT NOT FOR LONG!
GAH!
WHAM
NOW, PLEASE START THE MACHINE I WON'T ASK TWICE.
IT'S A PITY WE COULDN'T BE FRIENDS, TURTLES—YOU SEEM LIKE FINE PEOPLE.
BUT THEN AGAIN, WE AREN'T PEOPLE, ARE WE? WE SHOULDN'T EVEN EXIST.
PERHAPS FRENDSHIP IS NOT MEANT FOR US.
RAAHH!

XYZT
OF COURSE, ATTACKING ME WITH MY JAIL MASTER'S LITTLE TORTURE STICKS CERTAINLY DOESN'T *HELP* MATTERS.
I CAN'T IMAGINE THAT'S HOW *SUCCESSFUL* FRIENDSHIPS ARE BUILT.
I GUESS WE'LL *NEVER* KNOW.
SNAPP
HIYAH!
UFF!
THIS IS TRULY UNNECESSARY.
GRNCH
WHOULF.
I HAD ONLY INTENDED TO KILL THOSE *ALIENS* TODAY— IT'S WHY I TRIED TO DIVERT YOU ALL *AWAY* FROM THE CARNAGE I'D PLANNED.
I NEVER WANTED TO HURT *ANY* OF YOU, EITHER.
WELL, GUESS WHAT...

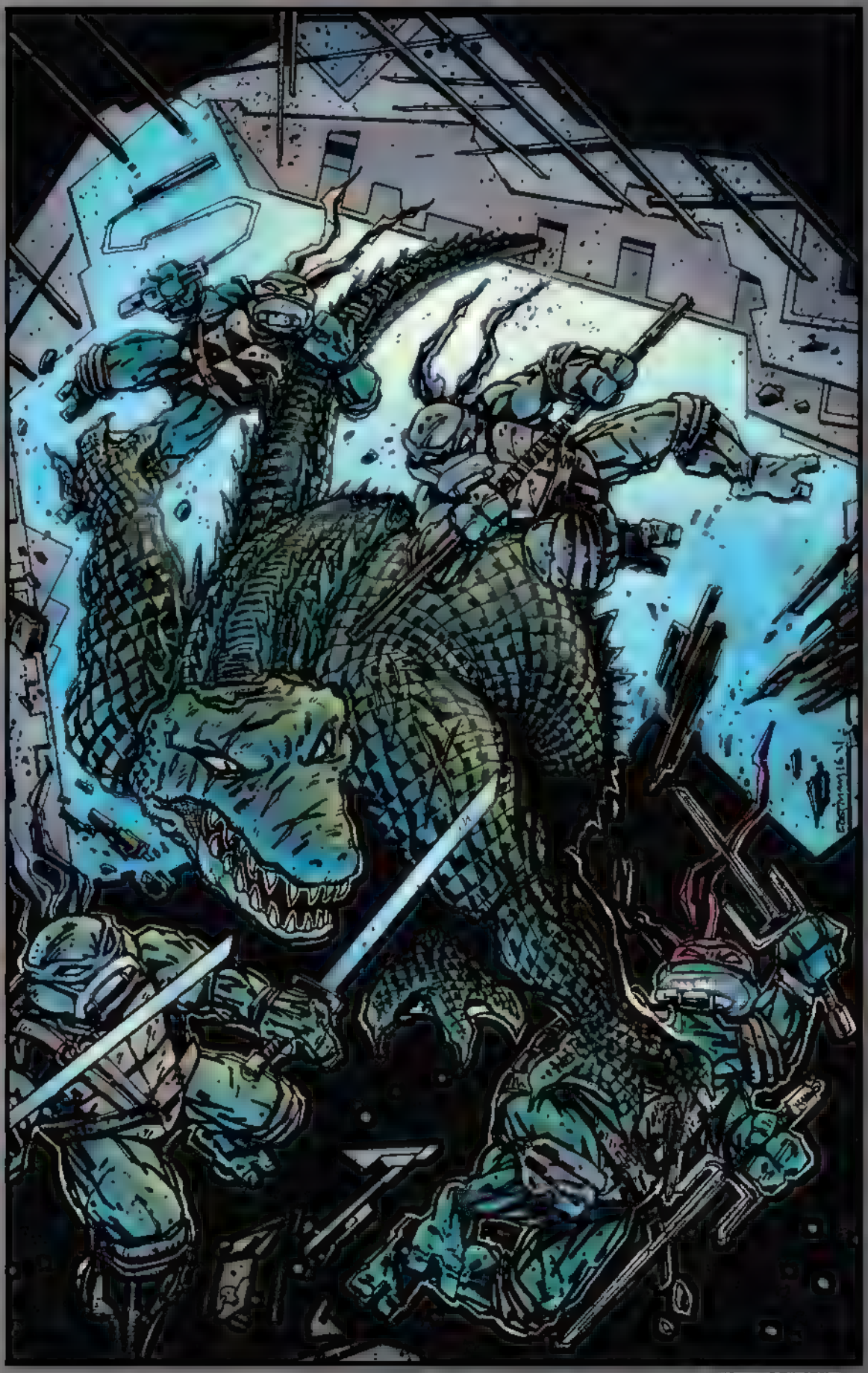
GRAHH!
...I CHANGED MY MIND.
YES. I'M SUDDENLY HAVING A CHANGE OF HEART MYSELF.
NO!
FWIK
TIME TO STOP, DUDE. THIS IS STUPID.
I'LL GIVE THIS BACK SOON AS YOU PROMISE TO CHILLAX.
YAH!
TWO CAN PLAY THAT GAME.
:GASP:


MIKEY!
GUYS *KOFF*... CAN'T BREATHE...
STAY *KOFF* BACK... OR I'LL *CRUSH* HIM BEFORE HE HAS A CHANCE TO *KOFF* SUFFOCATE.
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
YOU ALREADY *KOFF*... *KNOW*. A NEW HOME... AWAY FROM THIS CURSED *KOFF*... PRISON. YOU... YOU FOUR *OWE* ME THAT MUCH.
HELL NO!
YES!
GO NOW, GUYS- BACK TO NEW YORK. WHATEVER LEATHERHEAD'S DONE, HE'S *RIGHT*-WE OWE HIM. *I* OWE HIM.
HE SAVED MY LIFE.
NOW GO WITH HIM SO WE CAN SAVE *MIKEY'S*.
HRRNNN... HRNNN...
BUT YOU...
SOMEBODY'S GOTTA OPERATE THE TELEPORTER FROM *THIS* END. I'LL BE FINE...
...HAROLD WILL HELP GET ME *HOME* WHEN YOU GUYS ARE CLEAR.
NOW, QUICK...
CLIK

"...BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE."
FOOM
HRRFFF...!
OH..
OKAY, WE'RE HERE.
WHAT NOW, LEATHERHEAD?
I... I DON'T... KNOW.
SO MANY SMELLS...
SO MANY SOUNDS...

TOO... MUCH... TOO MUCH. NEED TO BE ALONE... TO THINK... TO... PLAN.
WE ARE NOT DONE, TURTLES.
I SWEAR IT.
SPLSSH
UNFF!
WELCOME TO THE BIG CITY.

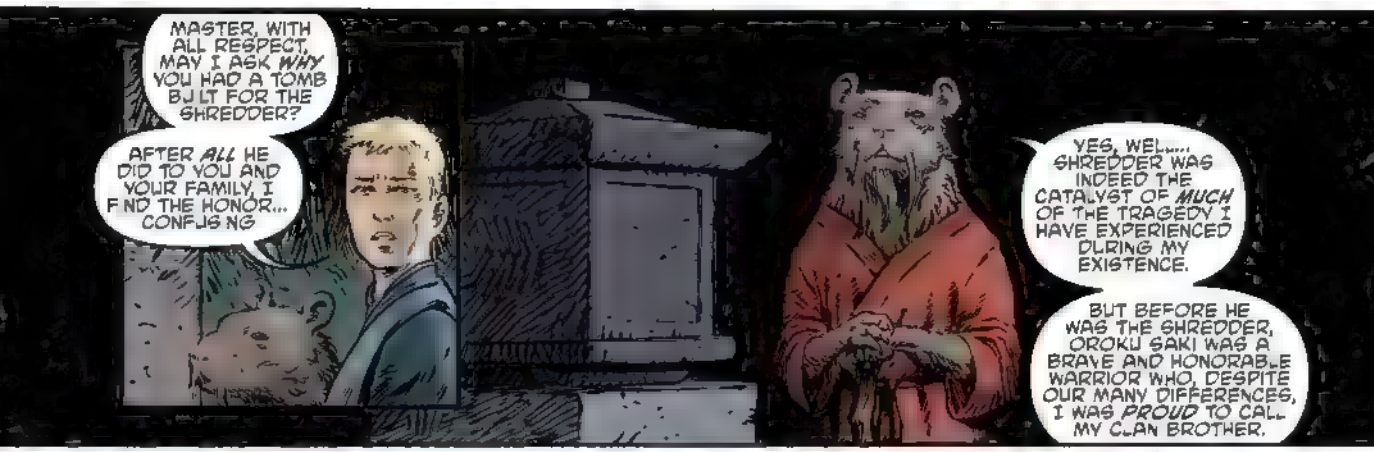
LATER.
I FEEL BAD LETTING YOU GO BACK TO THE LAIR ALONE, MIKEY. I WISH YOU'D COME *INSIDE* WITH US AFTER EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED.
THANKS, LEO, BUT I'M GOOD. 'SIDES, TOOK ME *HOURS* TO GET THAT PLACE CLEANED UP—DON'T WANT ALL THAT HARD WORK TO GO TO WASTE, YOU KNOW?
YEAH, DON'T SWEAT IT, LEO. KID JUST NEEDS SOME SPACE THESE DAYS—HE'LL BE FINE AND SO WILL DONNIE. HE LOVES DOIN' THAT EGGHEAD TELEPORTIN' STUFF WITH HAROLD.
LEATHERHEAD, ON THE OTHER HAND—WHO KNOWS *WHERE* THAT BEAST'LL SHOW UP NEXT, AM I RIGHT?
GUYS—LOOK.
YO, WHERE'S THE GUARDS?
I DON'T KNOW. MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHERE'S...
...FATHER?



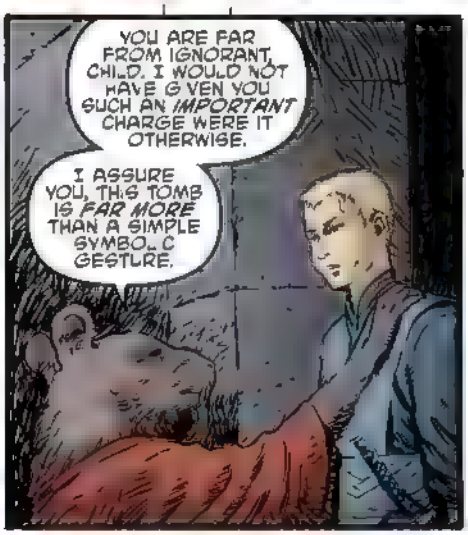
ART BY KEVIN EASTMAN
COLORS BY TOMMY GARCIA

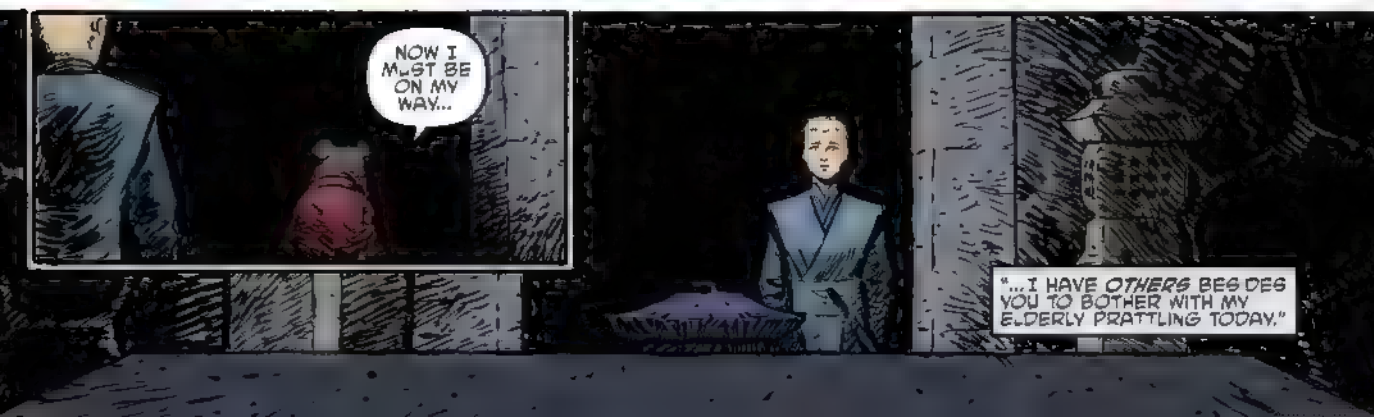
NOW.
FATHER?
?!
MY SONS...

BEFORE.
MASTER SPLINTER! I WAS NOT *EXPECTING* YOU.
PLEASE, STAND AT EASE, CHILD.
THIS IS A FRIENDLY VISIT, *NOTHING* MORE. I PREFER TO KEEP MYSELF OCCUPIED WHENEVER MY SONS ARE AWAY ON A MISSION
I FIND IT HELPS TO CALM MY RESTLESS *PATERNAL* SPIRIT.


MASTER, WITH ALL RESPECT, MAY I ASK *WHY* YOU HAD A TOMB BUILT FOR THE SHREDDER?
AFTER *ALL* HE DID TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY, I FIND THE HONOR... CONFUSING
YES, WELL..... SHREDDER WAS INDEED THE CATALYST OF *MUCH* OF THE TRAGEDY I HAVE EXPERIENCED DURING MY EXISTENCE.
BUT BEFORE HE WAS THE SHREDDER, OROKU SAKI WAS A BRAVE AND HONORABLE WARRIOR WHO, DESPITE OUR MANY DIFFERENCES, I WAS *PROUD* TO CALL MY CLAN BROTHER.

AND LEST YOU FORGET, HE WAS YOUR MASTER FOR A TIME—*MASTER* OF THE *FOOT CLAN*.
YOU MAY FIND IT DIFFICULT TO RESPECT THE INDIVIDUAL WHO BEARS THAT TITLE, JENNIKA, BUT IT IS YOUR SWORN DUTY TO *ALWAYS* RESPECT THE TITLE ITSELF.
YES, MASTER. PLEASE FORGIVE MY IGNORANCE.


YOU ARE FAR FROM IGNORANT, CHILD. I WOULD NOT HAVE GIVEN YOU SUCH AN *IMPORTANT* CHARGE WERE IT OTHERWISE.
I ASSURE YOU, THIS TOMB IS *FAR MORE* THAN A SIMPLE SYMBOLIC GESTURE.


NOW I MUST BE ON MY WAY...
"...I HAVE *OTHERS* BESIDES YOU TO BOTHER WITH MY ELDERLY PRATTLING TODAY."

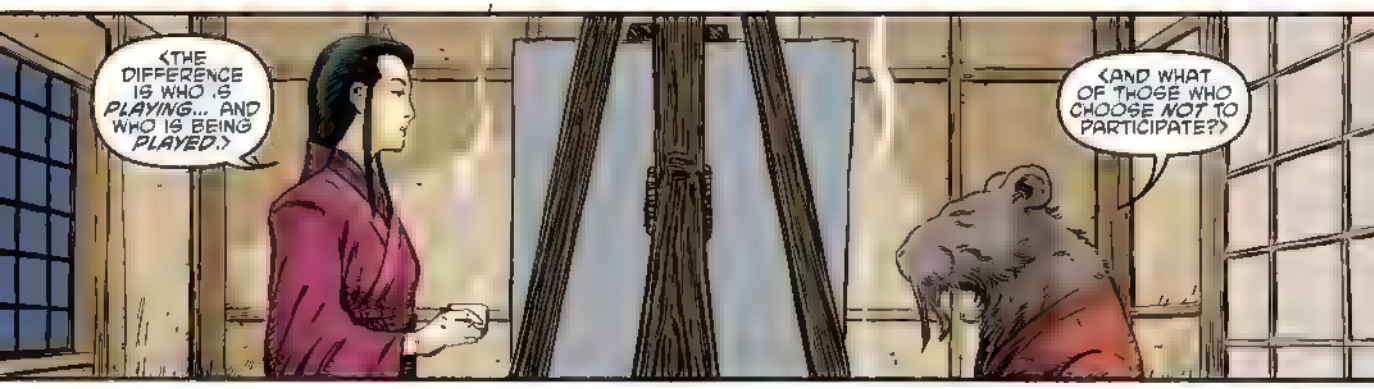
KNOCK KNOCK
<GOOD EVENING, HAMATO YOSHI.>
<GOOD EVENING, KITSUNE. THIS IS NOT AN *INCONVENIENT* TIME FOR A VISIT, I HOPE?>
<NOT AT ALL.>
<THE TIME IS *ALWAYS* CONVENIENT WHEN THE MASTER COMES TO CALL.>
<TEA?>
<YES, PLEASE.>
<THIS IS VERY BEAUTIFUL, KITSUNE.>
<THANK YOU.>
<WHAT STARTED AS A SIMPLE *DIVERSION* TO OCCUPY THE LONG, LONELY HOURS SPENT IN CONFINEMENT...>
<...HAS BECOME A FAR MORE *PERSONAL* ENDEAVOR AS OF LATE.>
<YES... I SEE>
<THE DRAGON AND FOX I UNDERSTAND. BUT THE *PHOENIX*?>
<AH, YES—THE MYSTICAL SYMBOL OF DEATH AND REBIRTH. YOU SHOULD NOT READ *TOO DEEPLY* INTO ITS MEANING.>

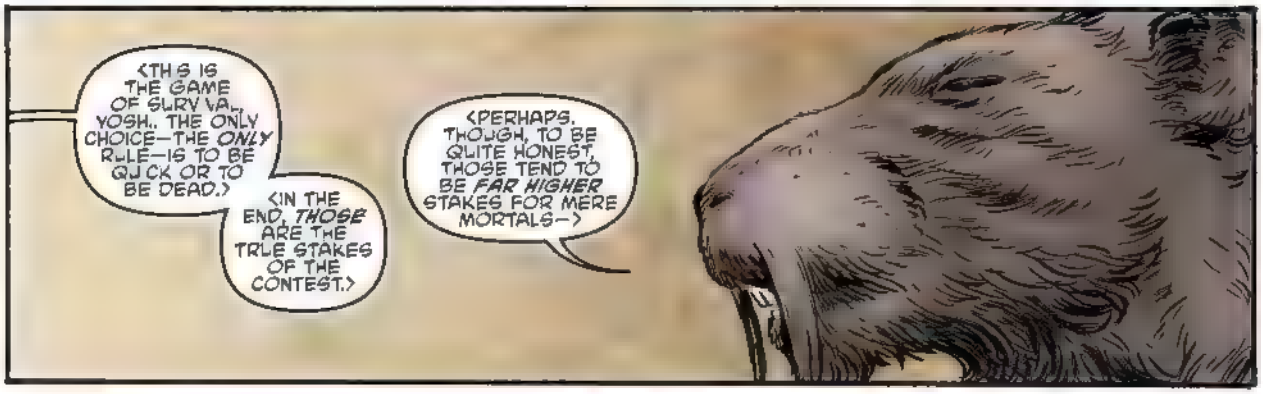
〈FOR ME, IT REPRESENTS A HOPE FOR A *BETTER* TOMORROW.〉
〈AND WHAT HOPE IS *THAT*, MAY I ASK?〉
〈YOU ARE *MASTER* OF THE FOOT CLAN, HAMATO YOSHI—YOU MAY DO *WHATEVER* YOU PLEASE.〉

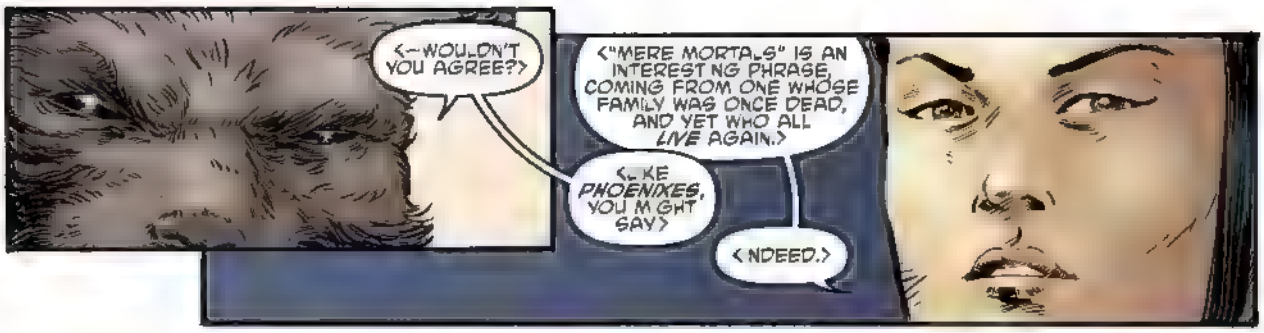
〈BUT TO ANSWER YOUR QUERY, I SIMPLY SEEK A SENSE OF *WELLBEING*, JUST LIKE ANY OTHER CREATURE ON THIS PLANET.〉
〈AND I HAVE LIVED LONG ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT WILL ONLY COME TO ONE WHO IS ABLE TO FIND A WAY TO *RISE* FROM THE ASHES OF PAST TRAGEDIES AND PAST DEFEATS.〉
〈LIKE A PHOENIX?〉
〈JUST SO.〉

〈I AM CURIOUS... THIS WELLBEING YOU SEEK—DOES IT RELATE AT ALL TO THE *GAME* YOU PLAY WITH THE OTHER IMMORTALS LIKE YOU? THE SPOILS AWARDED TO THE VICTOR, PERHAPS?〉
〈YOU HAVE TOLD ME YOUR KIND ONLY PLAY FOR AMUSEMENT, YET I WONDER—WHAT ARE THE *TRUE* STAKES OF YOUR CONTEST?〉

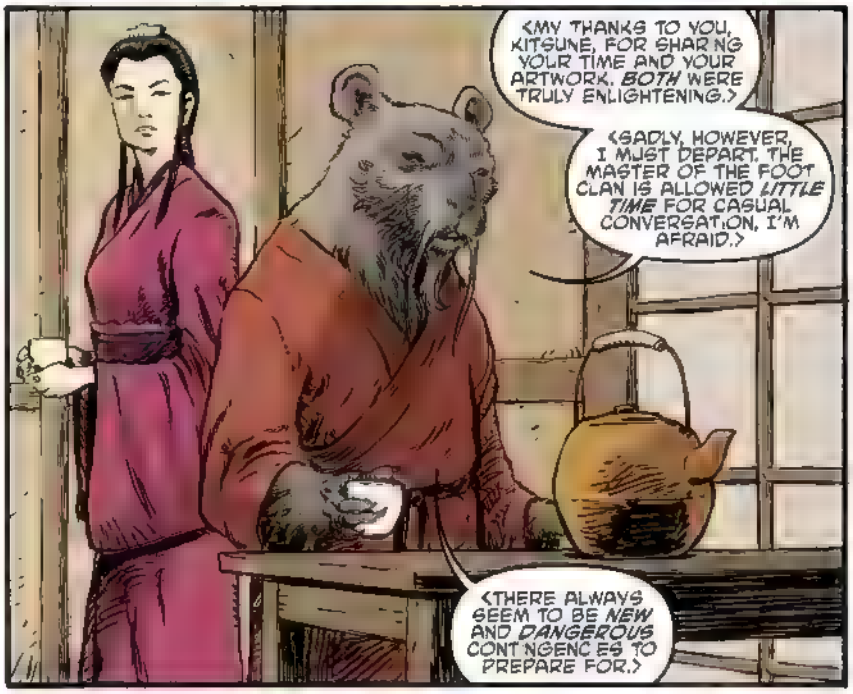
〈*OUR* CONTEST? WHY, YOSHI, YOU ACT AS IF WE IMMORTALS ARE THE *ONLY* ONES TAKING PART.〉
〈IN TRUTH, *ALL* WHO EXIST ARE INVOLVED IN THE GAME—YOU, ME, YOUR SONS, MISS O'NEIL, MY BROTHERS AND MY SISTERS—EVERYONE.〉


〈THE DIFFERENCE IS WHO IS *PLAYING*... AND WHO IS BEING *PLAYED*.〉
〈AND WHAT OF THOSE WHO CHOOSE *NOT* TO PARTICIPATE?〉


〈THIS IS THE GAME OF SURVIVAL, YOSHI. THE ONLY CHOICE—THE *ONLY* RULE—IS TO BE QUICK OR TO BE DEAD.〉
〈IN THE END, *THOSE* ARE THE TRUE STAKES OF THE CONTEST.〉
〈PERHAPS, THOUGH, TO BE QUITE HONEST, THOSE TEND TO BE *FAR HIGHER* STAKES FOR MERE MORTALS—〉


<~WOULDN'T YOU AGREE?>
<"MERE MORTALS" IS AN INTERESTING PHRASE, COMING FROM ONE WHOSE FAMILY WAS ONCE DEAD, AND YET WHO ALL *LIVE* AGAIN.>
<~LIKE *PHOENIXES*, YOU MIGHT SAY>
<INDEED.>

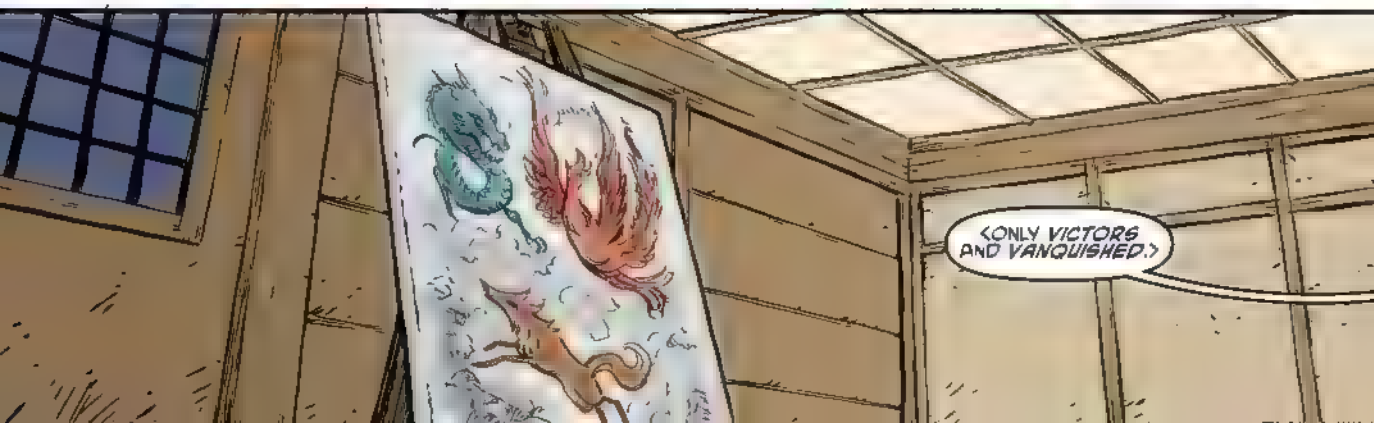
<YES, WELL, IT APPEARS MY TEA HAS GONE *COLD*.>

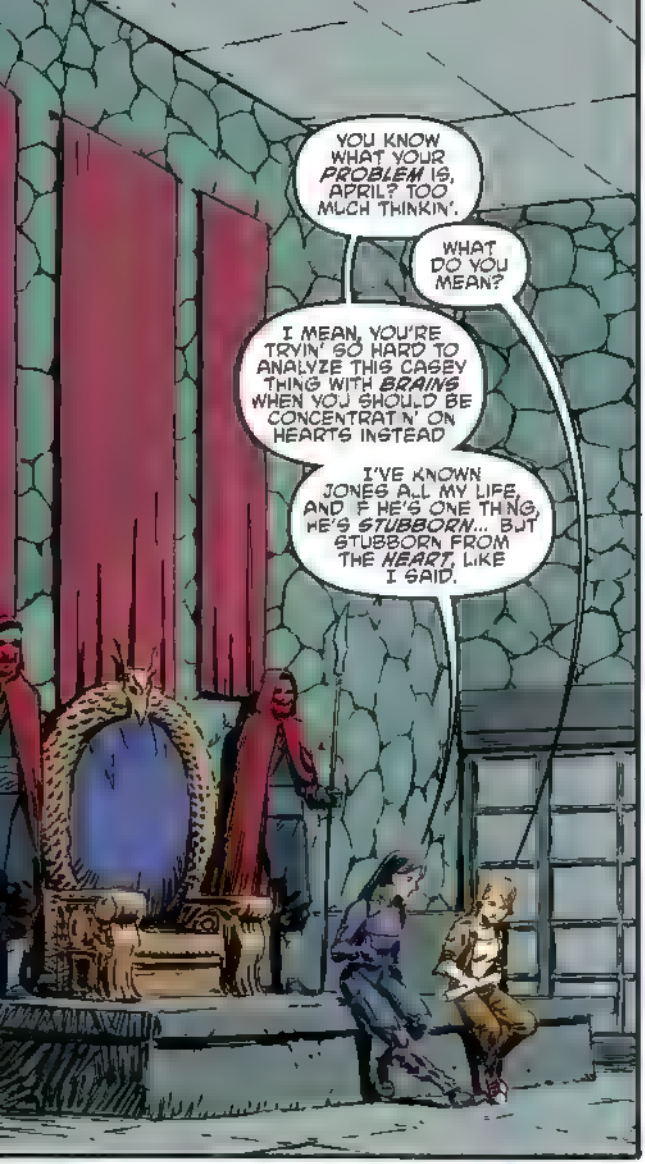

<MY THANKS TO YOU, KITSUNE, FOR SHARING YOUR TIME AND YOUR ARTWORK. *BOTH* WERE TRULY ENLIGHTENING.>
<SADLY, HOWEVER, I MUST DEPART. THE MASTER OF THE FOOT CLAN IS ALLOWED *LITTLE TIME* FOR CASUAL CONVERSATION, I'M AFRAID.>
<THERE ALWAYS SEEM TO BE *NEW* AND *DANGEROUS* CONTINGENCIES TO PREPARE FOR.>

<OH, BEFORE I GO, ONE *LAST* QUESTION.>

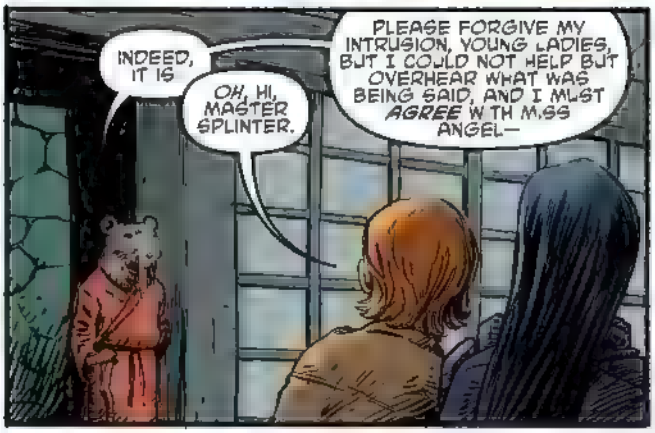
<BEFORE HE BECAME THE SHREDDER, WAS *OROKU SAKI* INDEED A PLAYER... OR WAS HE, IN FACT, ONE BEING PLAYED?>

<SAKI WAS A MAGNIFICENT AND POWERFUL *DRAGON WARRIOR* FROM BEGINNING TO END.>
<HE *FULLY* UNDERSTOOD THERE IS NO PLACE FOR COWARDICE OR COMPROMISE IN THIS GAME—NO STALEMATES OR HALF-MEASURES.>


<ONLY *VICTORS* AND *VANQUISHED*.>


YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR PROBLEM IS, APRIL? TOO MUCH THINKIN'.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I MEAN, YOU'RE TRYIN' SO HARD TO ANALYZE THIS CASEY THING WITH BRAINS WHEN YOU SHOULD BE CONCENTRATIN' ON HEARTS INSTEAD
I'VE KNOWN JONES ALL MY LIFE, AND IF HE'S ONE THING, HE'S STUBBORN... BUT STUBBORN FROM THE HEART, LIKE I SAID.

HE THINKS HIS FRIENDS ARE IN DANGER, SO HE'S GONNA DO EVERYTHING HE CAN TO PROTECT US—ESPECIALLY YOU—EVEN IF THAT MEANS HE'S GOTTA BREAK UP WITH YOU TO DO IT.*
I AIN'T SAYIN' HE'S RIGHT, BUT HE IS COMIN' FROM A RIGHT PLACE, KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
YEAH. IT'S JUST... I KNOW I'LL BE OKAY, BUT I WORRY ABOUT HIM A LOT.
HE'LL COME AROUND--YOU'LL SEE. JUST MIGHT TAKE A COUPLE BLACK EYES AND A FEW BROKEN TEETH BEFORE HE DOES BUT, HEY, THAT'S OUR CASEY.


PLEASE FORGIVE MY INTRUSION, YOUNG LADIES, BUT I COULD NOT HELP BUT OVERHEAR WHAT WAS BEING SAID, AND I MUST AGREE WITH MISS ANGEL—
OH, HI, MASTER SPLINTER.
INDEED, IT IS

—CASEY JONES IS A LOYAL FRIEND AND A FIERCE WARRIOR.
SPEAKIN' OF BALANCE, SOMETHIN'S GOIN' ON WITH ALOPEX THAT'S GOT ME WORRIED, MASTER SPLINTER.
THIS IS THE THIRD TIME THIS WEEK WE HAD TO CUT OUR PATROL SHORT BECAUSE SHE WAS SO OUT OF IT.
I, TOO, AM CONFIDENT HE WILL FIND A WAY TO PROPERLY BALANCE THOSE ADMIRABLE QUALITIES IN TIME.
I MADE HER GO TO BED SOON AS WE GOT HERE AND SHE DIDN'T EVEN TRY TO ARGUE.

WHATEVER'S WRONG, SHE AIN'T HER NORMAL SELF, THAT'S FOR SURE.
ANYWAY, I'M OUTTA HERE. CATCH YA LATER.
BYE, ANGEL. AND THANKS.
BE SAFE, CHILD.

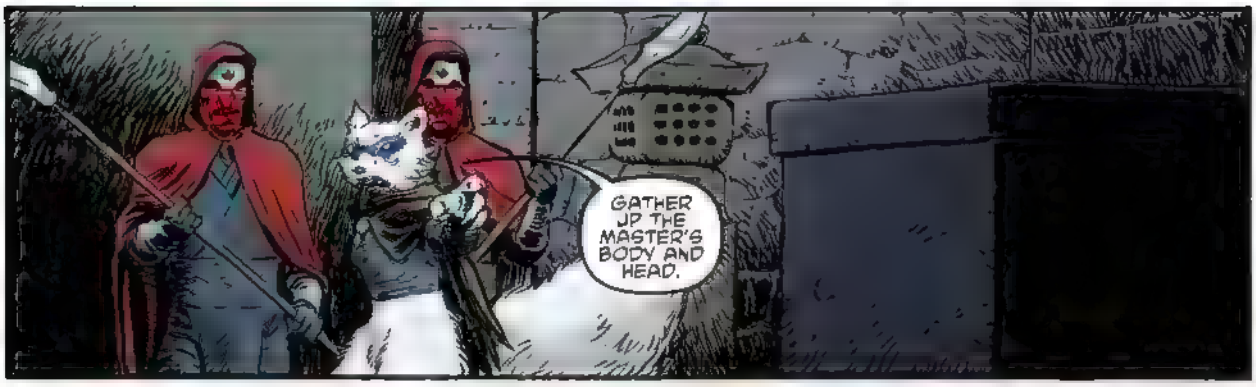
MASTER SPLINTER, IS IT OKAY IF I USE THE ARCHIVAL LIBRARY? I'VE UNCOVERED SOME INTERESTING INFO ON THE SCROLL THAT I'D LIKE TO CROSS-REFERENCE AGAINST SOME THINGS DOWN THERE.
CERTAINLY, MISS O'NEIL.
AND PLEASE KEEP ME APPRISED OF YOUR FINDINGS—

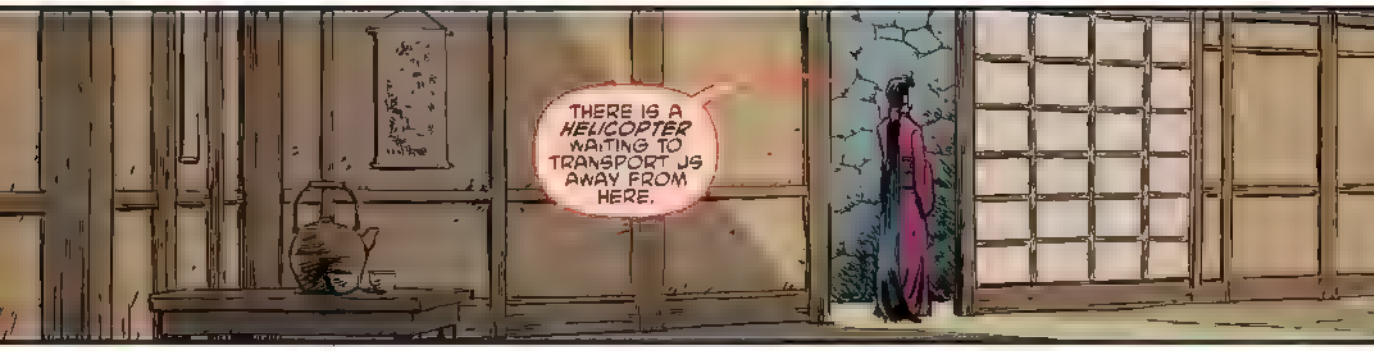
"—I FEAR WE MAY BE FORCED TO *UTILIZE* YOUR NEWFOUND KNOWLEDGE VERY SOON."
IT IS TIME.
NNGG...
AWAKEN, MY LITTLE FOX.
WHA?!
WE BEGIN.
BEGIN...

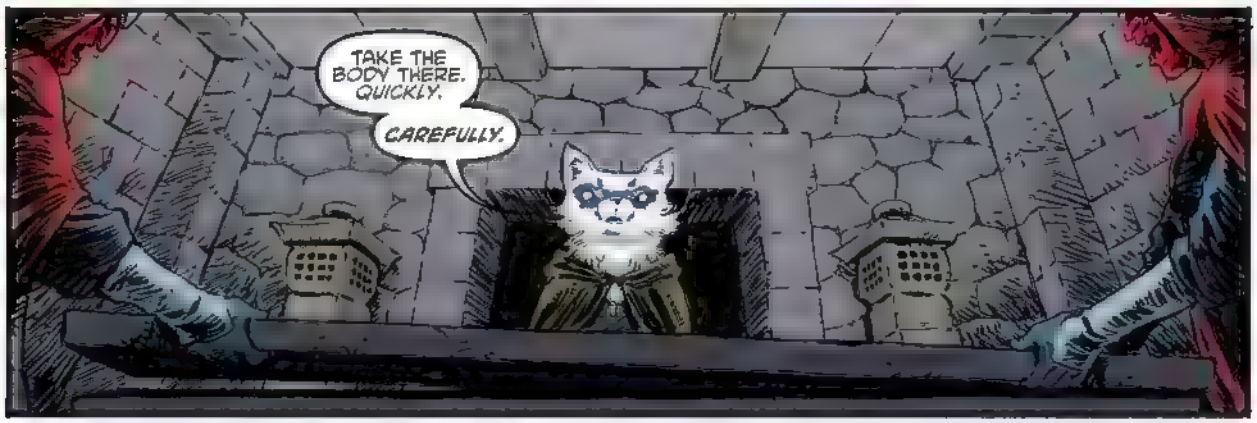
PASSPHRASE REQUIRED.
"TRUE STRENGTH IS THE FLOWER OF WISDOM..."
beep
"...BUT TS SEED IS ACTION."
KER-CHNK
HALT.
NONE BUT THE MASTER MAY PASS.
NO, YOU ARE MISTAKEN...
...OPEN THIS DOOR NOW...
...AND FOLLOW ME.

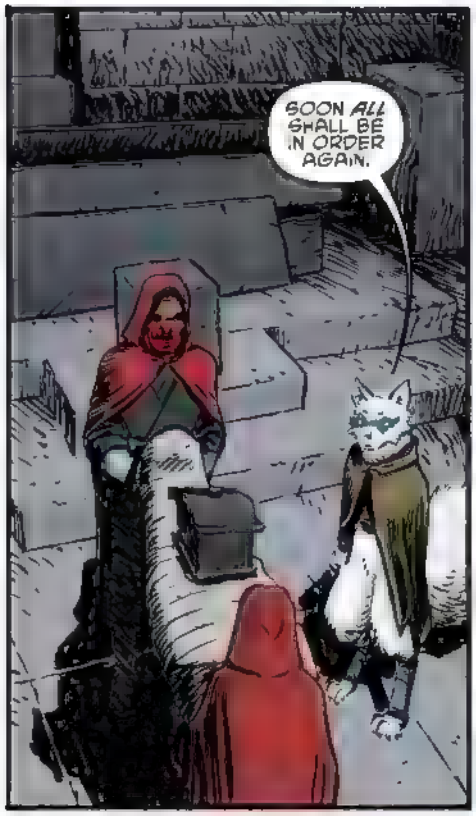
WHO—
—ALOPEX? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
AND WHO GAVE YOU THE PASSPHRASE?
I WOULD ASK YOU THE SAME THING, GIRL...
...WHY ARE YOU HERE?
TO SERVE THE MASTER.
AH. IS THAT SO?
AND WHICH MASTER DO YOU SERVE, ASSASSIN?

I SERVE MASTER SPLINTER, OF COURSE AND I AM NO *LONGER* AN ASSASSIN.
IS THIS... IS THIS SOME KIND OF *TEST*, ALOPEX?
YES. IT IS.
AND SADLY...
KRAK
...YOU HAVE *FAILED*.


GATHER UP THE MASTER'S BODY AND HEAD.


THERE IS A HELICOPTER WAITING TO TRANSPORT US AWAY FROM HERE.


TAKE THE BODY THERE. QUICKLY.
CAREFULLY.


SOON ALL SHALL BE IN ORDER AGAIN.

SOON ALL SHALL BE RIGHT.
ERNNG...

ALOPEX, PLEASE EXCUSE AN OLD MASTER FOR *INTRUDING* ON YOUR PRIVACY, BUT I HAVE COME TO SEE IF YOU ARE DOING...
.. WELL?
GONE.
YES, RAT—SHE IS GONE.
AND SOON...
NO.

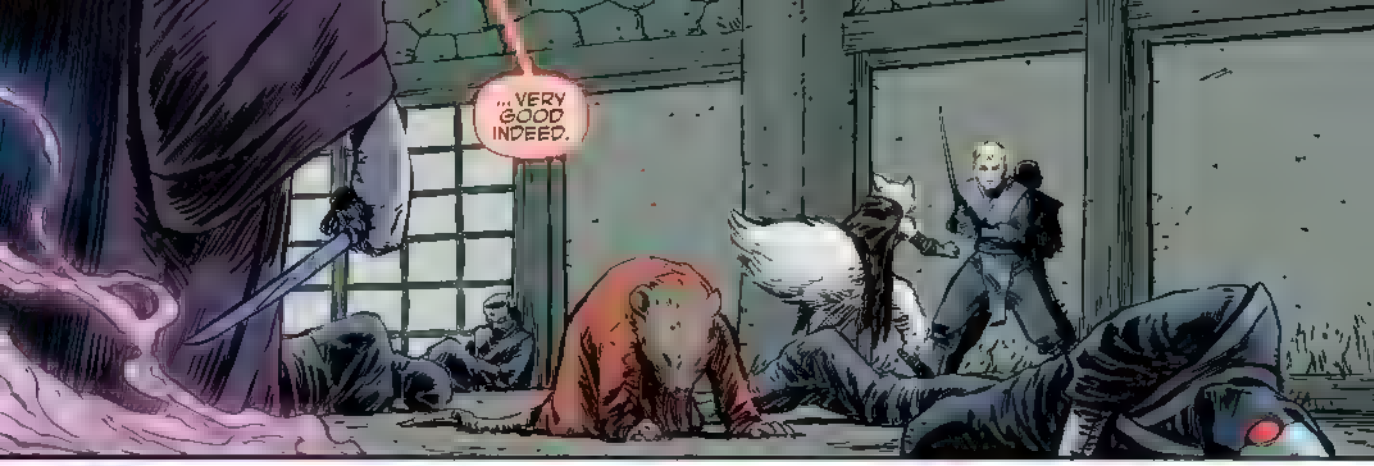
...YOU WILL BE GONE AS WELL.
KILL THE RODENT.
KILL!

WHOMP
TAK
SLAP
THUMP
THOK
WHUMP
KRK
BOP
KRAK
NO!

KLANG
GET AWAY!
WHOMP
SHIKK
AWAY FROM MY MASTER.

NO LONGER AN ASSASSIN, HM, GIRL?
THE BLOOD ON YOUR SWORD SAYS OTHERWISE.
IT WILL BE YOUR BLOOD SOON, WATCH. I PROMISE YOU THAT.
NO I DOUBT THAT.
ALOPEX?
YES?
CONSIDER YOURSELF UNLEASHED.
GRRR...

RAAAGH!
UNFF!
FWIK
GAH!
VERY GOOD, LITTLE FOX...

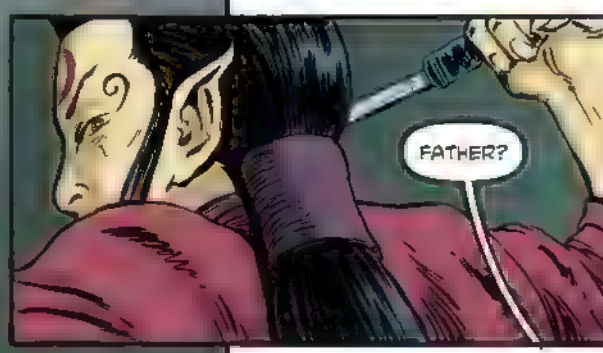

...VERY GOOD INDEED.

AND NOW, FOR THE WOULD-BE MASTER WHO BELIEVED HIMSELF TO BE A *PLAYER* IN THIS GAME

IN TRUTH, NOTHING MORE THAN A PAWN.
MY PAWN.

GOOD-BYE...

...HAMATO YOSHI.

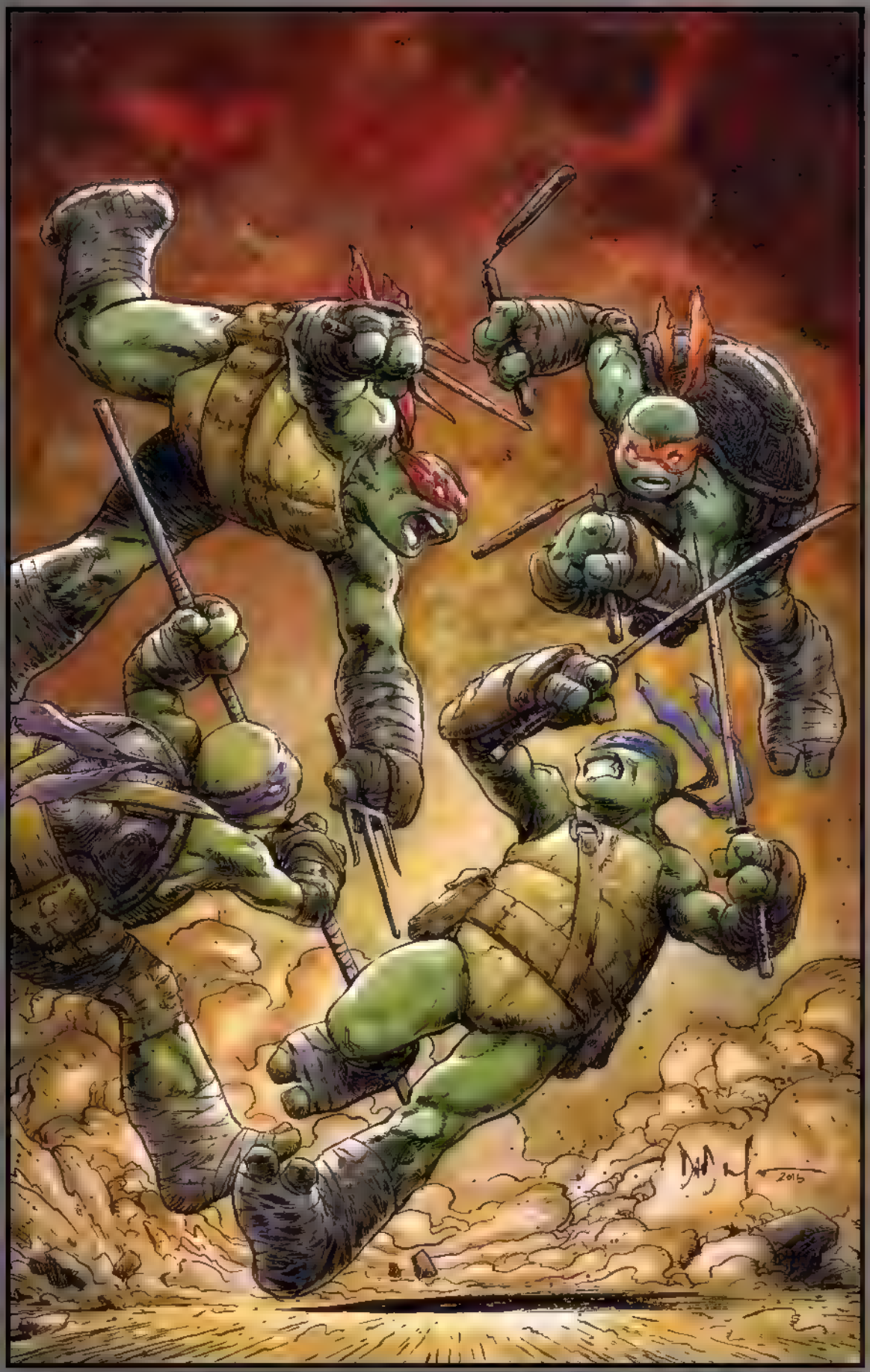

FATHER?

WHAT THE HELL?
MY SONS...
...SAVE JENNIKA.

TOO LATE FOR THAT, I'M AFRAID.
I ALREADY TOLD YOU, RODENT, IN THE END THERE ARE ONLY VICTORS...
...AND VANQUISHED.
SHLIP

NO!

KEVIN EASTMAN
TONI BARER



ISSUE #60

A RETAINER WHO SERVED THE GOVERNOR OF KAI WAS HEADING HOME ONE SUNDOWN FROM THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION WHEN HE SAW A FOX.
THE RETAINER GAVE CHASE AND SHOT AT IT WITH THE KIND OF NOISEMAKER ARROW USED FOR SCARING OFF DOGS.
HE HIT IT IN THE BACK LEG. THE FOX YELPED IN PAIN, ROLLED OVER, AND DOVE LIMPING INTO THE BRUSH.
AS THE RETAINER WENT TO RETRIEVE HIS ARROW, THE FOX REAPPEARED IN FRONT OF HIM AND HE WAS ABOUT TO SHOOT AT IT AGAIN WHEN...
...IT VANISHED!

A SHORT DISTANCE FROM HOME HE SAW THE FOX RUNNING AHEAD OF HIM CARRYING A FLAMING BRAND IN ITS MOUTH.
WHAT COULD IT BE UP TO?
HE SPURRED HIS HORSE ON.
ON REACHING THE HOUSE, THE FOX CHANGED INTO A HUMAN BEING AND SET THE HOUSE ON FIRE.
THE RETAINER WAS READY TO SHOOT AS SOON AS HE GOT WITHIN RANGE, BUT THE HUMAN CHANGED BACK INTO A FOX...
...AND GOT AWAY.
THE HOUSE BURNED DOWN.
BEINGS LIKE THAT EXACT SWIFT VENGEANCE...

...IT'S BETTER TO LEAVE THEM ALONE.
GYAAGH!
NO!

NNGGG...
STILL ALIVE?
WHA—
FWIK
GET OFF MY DAD.
HRGGKK...
RAPH! QUICK! WE'VE GOT TO GET FATHER OUT OF HERE!
KPKK
FWOMP
SCHLIP
HRRRANHH!
I'VE GOT YOU, FATHER. NOW YOU SEE WHY I BEGGED YOU TO WEAR THE KEVLAR ALL THE TIME?
YES... NNF... LEONARDO. AND YOUR ASTUTE PRECAUTIONS ARE CERTAINLY APPRECIATED.
NOW... LEAVE ME. PROTECT OUR FRIENDS.
YEAH, WELL...

"...I AIN'T SO SURE WHO'S A FRIEND AND WHO AIN'T RIGHT NOW, SENSE."
THE WITCH IS THE ONLY ENEMY HERE, RAPHAEL. THIS... IS HER DOING—
"—SHE MUST BE STOPPED."
GUYS! A LITTLE HELP, YEAH?!
YES... GROGK... LITTLE TURTLE..
"...SEEK YOUR BROTHERS' HELP."
HELP...
RAPH! NO!
GYAH!
SWIP

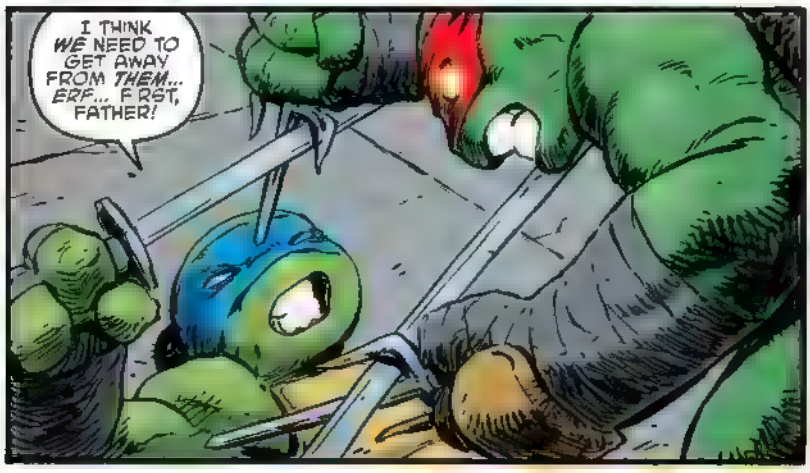
DUDE! WHY'D YOU DO THAT?!
THIS IS WHY.
OH.
SNAP OUT OF IT! KITSUNE'S GOT YOU UND—
YAH
HELP...
DAMMIT
AND NOW FOR THE CHUNIN...

...FETCH ME MY KNIFE.
DO YOU FEEL IT, MY SON?
YEAH. LIKE... A THOUSAND WORMS WRIGGLING INSIDE MY BRAIN.
I'VE FELT THIS BEFORE.
DARK MAGIC. YOU MUST FIGHT IT, LEONARDO.
DO NOT ALLOW THE WITCH INSIDE YOUR HEAD.
MY HEAD?
MY HEAD IS MY OWN!
FWK
WHAT IS THIS?
SO, THE RAT AND HIS ELDEST ARE IMMUNE TO MY POWERS, HMP.
NO MATTER. PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE IS BUT ONE OF MANY WEAPONS I UTILIZE.
SOME FAR BLOODIER THAN OTHERS.
REND THEM TO PIECES.
CRAP.
INDEED.

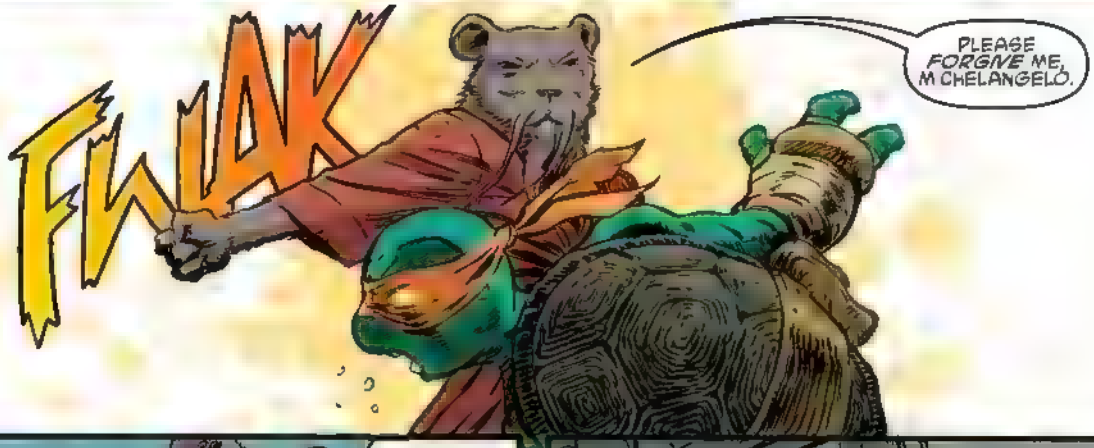
GRRRRR
ALOPEX, LISTEN TO ME—YOU'RE UNDER THE WITCH'S SPELL!
RARRGH!
FWAK
FIGHT HER—UNF!
WHUP
NOT... NRGG... ME.

YOUR FRIENDS NEED YOU.
WHO—
AKA!
WHAT... WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
A THING I RARELY EVER DO— INTERVENING.
I HAVE COME TO WARN YOU THAT YOUR FRIENDS REQUIRE YOUR HELP
I KNOW— THAT'S WHAT I'M DOING DOWN HERE.
WRACKING MY BRAIN LOOKING FOR CLUES TO HELP US STOP YOUR FAMILY.
YES, I SEE.
THOUGH, AS NOBLE AS YOUR INTELLECTUAL EFFORTS ARE, THE ASSISTANCE NEEDED NOW IS OF A MORE IMMEDIATE AND PHYSICAL NATURE.
PLEASE— TAKE THIS...
...AND PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION TO THE WORDS I AM ABOUT TO SPEAK.

WE MUST GET YOUR BROTHERS *AWAY* FROM K'TSUNE, LEONARDO!


I THINK *WE* NEED TO GET AWAY FROM *THEM*... *ERF*... FIRST, FATHER!

JUST GO


FWUAK
PLEASE *FORGIVE* ME, MICHELANGELO.

AND KNOW THAT THIS PAINS ME *FAR WORSE* THAN IT DOES YOU.

FAR WORSE.

SO, THE RAT WOULD CONSUME HIS YOUNG AFTER ALL, HM?
"SUCH FEROCITY."
ENOUGH, RAPHAEL.
SLAPP
GRAHH!
ENOUGH.
GUH...
WHUMP
FOOM
SUCH BITE

WHAT IN THE WORLD...?
AHH.. MORE FOOD FOR THE FODDER.
DONNIE...
...NO.
FOOD... FODDER...
DAMN! TOO LATE
YES. PLEASE HELP JENNIKA, MY SON
I WILL DEAL WITH DONATELLO!

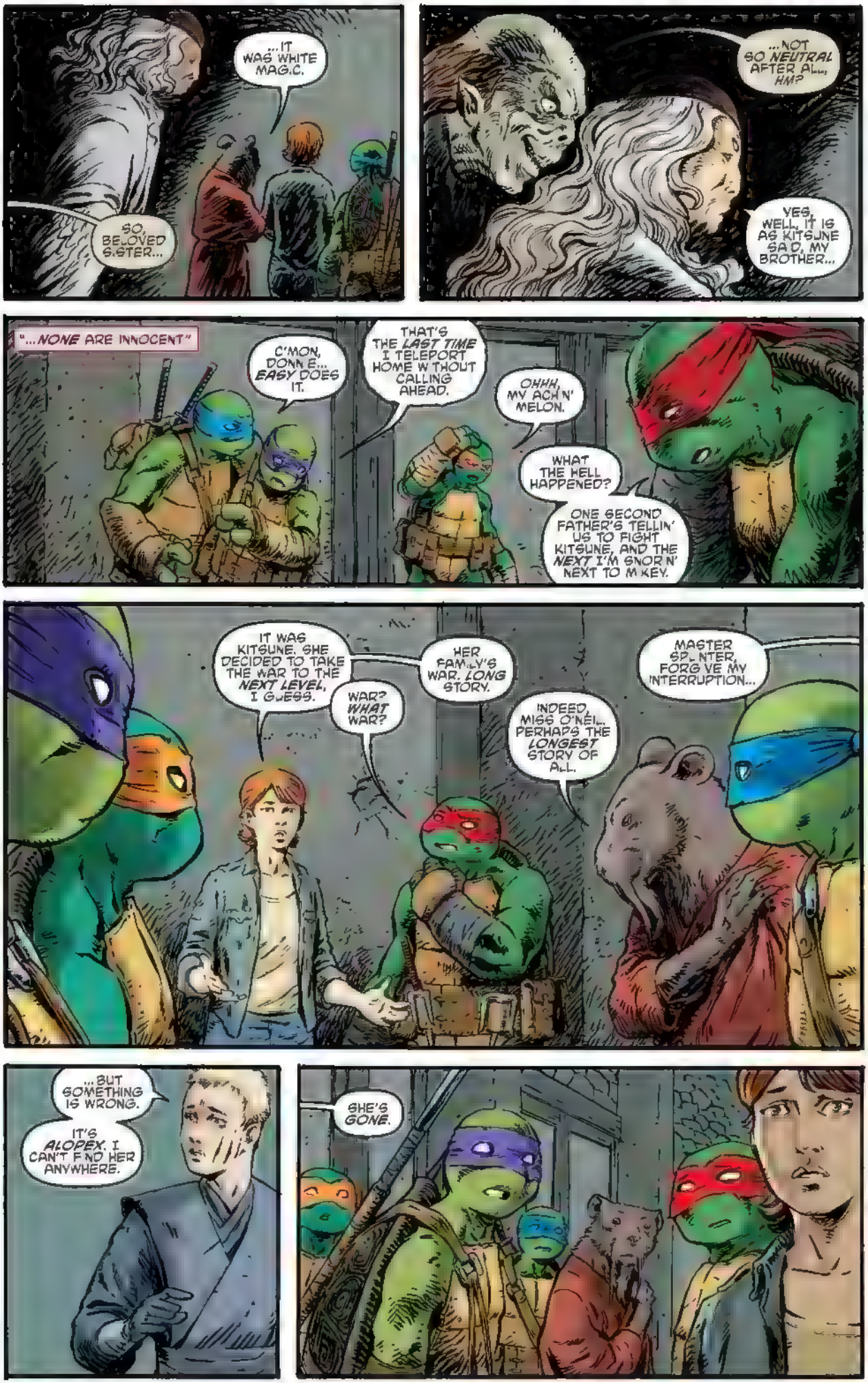
NUH!
SHUP
CRAK
MASTER... I HAVE FAILED...
ALOPEX!
YOU DON'T WANNA DO THAT.
THIS ISN'T WHO YOU ARE.
LEO?
NO, LITTLE FOX...
A BEAR.

BEAR!
RRRARR!
CHOK
FWUMP
TH-THANK YOU, CHUNIN. YOU...
...YOU SAVED MY LIFE.
YEAH?
WE'LL SEE

MY SON, I HAVE ALREADY APOLOGIZED TO YOUR BROTHERS.
NOW, AS MUCH AS I WOULD RATHER NOT...
CHAK
...I MUST DO THE SAME TO YOU.
BECAUSE THE TIME HAS COME TO END THIS MADNESS
SCHWIP
BEFORE ANOTHER INNOCENT LIFE IS LOST.
I HOPE YOU WILL UNDERSTAND.

INNOCENT LIFE, YOSHI? TRULY?
I HAVE WALKED THIS WORLD FOR MILLENNIA, AND IF I HAVE LEARNED BUT ONE THING, IT IS THAT NONE WHO EXIST ARE INNOCENT. NONE.
PERHAPS, KITSUNE.
BUT NOT ALL ARE TO BLAME FOR THEIR GUILT.
BACK AWAY FROM MY MASTER, WITCH.
AH, YES, THE ASSASSIN. IF EVER ONE BORE GUILT FOR THEIR DARK DEEDS, IT IS YOU.
DO YOU DARE TO ATONE FOR YOUR SINS NOW, GIRL?
DO YOU DARE TO FACE ME?
NOT HER, KITSUNE.
ME.
SO, MISS O'NEIL—YOU HAVE DECIDED TO JOIN US... AND TO CHALLENGE ME, NO LESS.
I AM CURIOUS, THOUGH—HOW, PRAY TELL, DO YOU INTEND TO DO THAT?
WITH A PRAYER, ACTUALLY...
...AND THIS.
AKAP

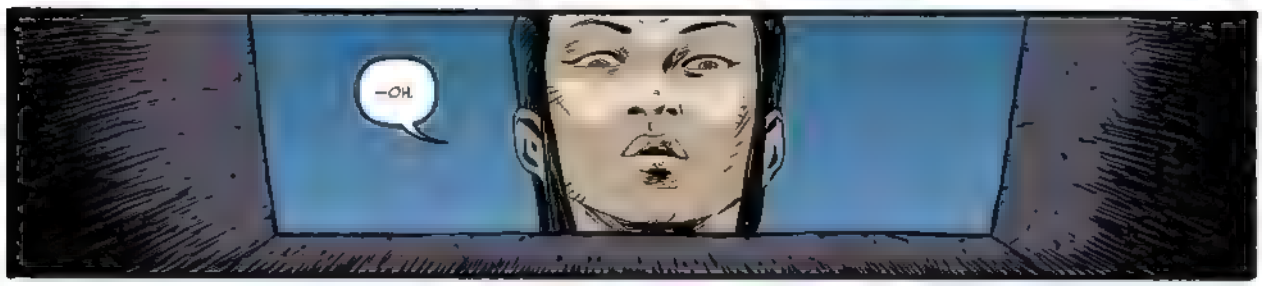
"POWERS OF CREATION, MASTERS OF ALL. HEAR MY LAMENTATIONS, HEED MY CALL.
"RESTORE ETERNITY'S BALANCE, TURN WRONG INTO RIGHT. END THIS DAY'S MALICE, CAST DARKNESS INTO... LIGHT!"
NO!
MY... MY MIND CONTROL. GONE.
GONE!
WHOA IT REALLY WORKED.
APRI... HOW THE HECK DID YOU... DO THAT?
I HAVE NO IDEA.
WHITE MAGIC...

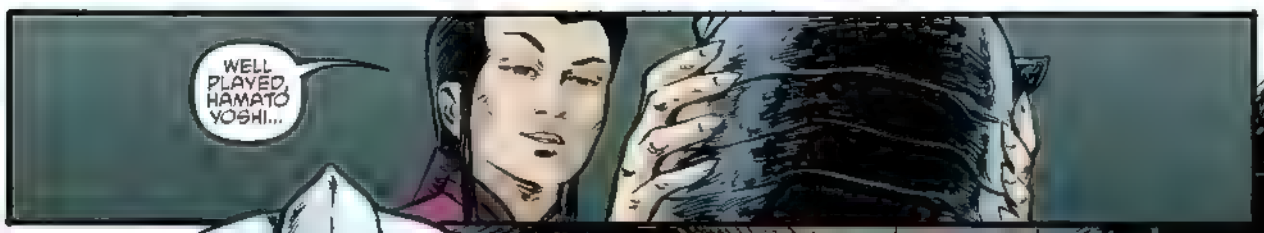

...IT WAS WHITE MAGIC.
SO, BELOVED SISTER...
...NOT SO NEUTRAL AFTER ALL, HM?
YES, WELL, IT IS AS KITSUNE SAID, MY BROTHER...
"...NONE ARE INNOCENT"
C'MON, DONNIE... EASY DOES IT.
THAT'S THE LAST TIME I TELEPORT HOME WITHOUT CALLING AHEAD.
OHHH, MY ACHIN' MELON.
WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED?
ONE SECOND FATHER'S TELLIN' US TO FIGHT KITSUNE, AND THE NEXT I'M SNORIN' NEXT TO MIKEY.
IT WAS KITSUNE. SHE DECIDED TO TAKE THE WAR TO THE NEXT LEVEL, I GUESS.
WAR? WHAT WAR?
HER FAMILY'S WAR. LONG STORY.
INDEED, MISS O'NEIL. PERHAPS THE LONGEST STORY OF ALL.
MASTER SPLINTER, FORGIVE MY INTERRUPTION...
...BUT SOMETHING IS WRONG.
IT'S ALOPEX. I CAN'T FIND HER ANYWHERE.
SHE'S GONE.

EPILOGUE.
INFERNAL MEDDLER!
I WILL NOT FORGET THIS, AKA!
YOU DO NOT ATTACK ME?
HM. MY MENTAL POWERS HAVE RETURNED, IT SEEMS.
AKA'S SPELL WAS ONLY TEMPORARY.
AH, SISTER, YOUR CONSTANT BENEVOLENCE WILL BE YOUR UNDOING YET.
PILOT...
"...TAKE US AWAY FROM THIS PLACE."

AND SO THE GAME CONTINUES. I DID NOT ACHIEVE *ALL* I HAD HOPED FOR THIS DAY, MY BELOVED, BUT IT MATTERS NOT.

IN THE END, THE PRIZE I SOUGHT ABOVE ALL OTHERS IS *MINE* TO CLAIM.
YOU HAVE BEEN *RETURNED* TO ME AT LAST, MY DRAGON WARRI—


—OH.


WELL PLAYED, HAMATO YOSHI...

"...WELL PLAYED INDEED."

art by KEVIN EASTMAN
colors by TONI HARRIS

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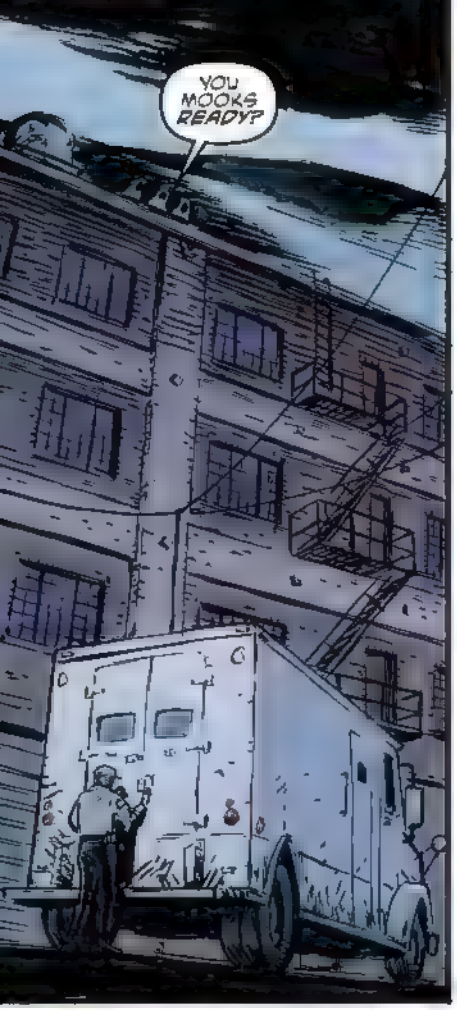
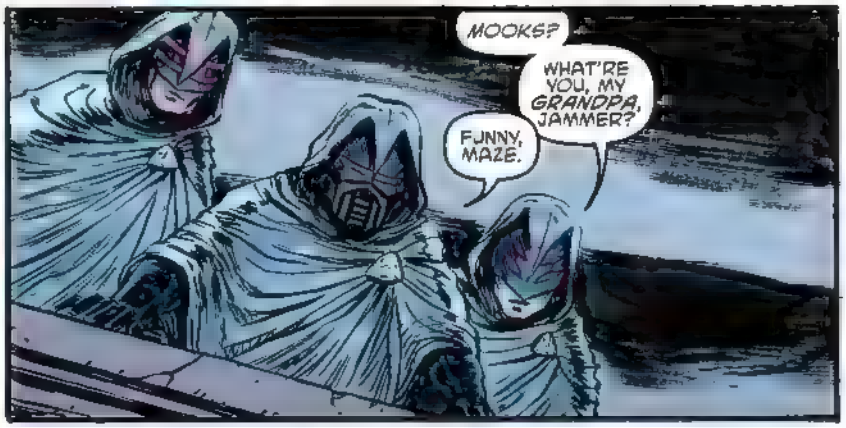
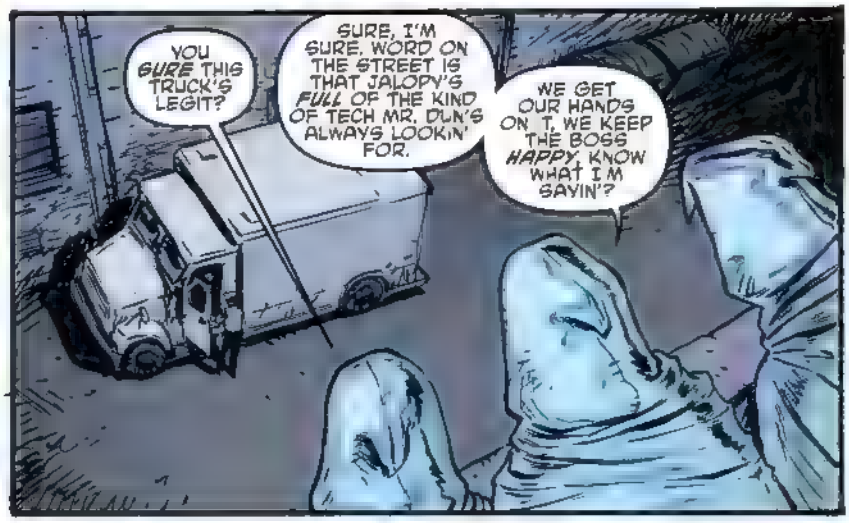

YOU MOOKS *READY?*


MOOKS?
WHAT'RE YOU, MY *GRANDPA*, JAMMER?
FUNNY, MAZE.


YOU *SURE* THIS TRUCK'S LEGIT?
SURE, I'M SURE. WORD ON THE STREET IS THAT JALOPY'S *FULL* OF THE KIND OF TECH MR. DUN'S ALWAYS LOOKIN' FOR.
WE GET OUR HANDS ON T, WE KEEP THE BOSS *HAPPY*. KNOW WHAT I'M SAYIN'?

JALOPY? SERIOUSLY? YOU REALLY *ARE* OLD, MAN.
NAH.

I'M WHAT YOU CALL A *CLASSIC*.

OKAY, MAZE, GET TO *SLASHIN'* TIRES BEFORE THIS THING HAS A CHANCE TO ROLL OUTTA HERE. *WASTE* THE DRIVER IF YOU GOTTA. ME AND TURK WILL TAKE CARE OF THINGS IN THE BACK.
IF THIS HAUL'S AS IMPORTANT AS I THINK IT IS, THERE'S *BOUND* TO BE SOME MUSCLE...

... INSIDE.
WELL, WHAT A SURPRISE.
NO.
NOT REALLY.

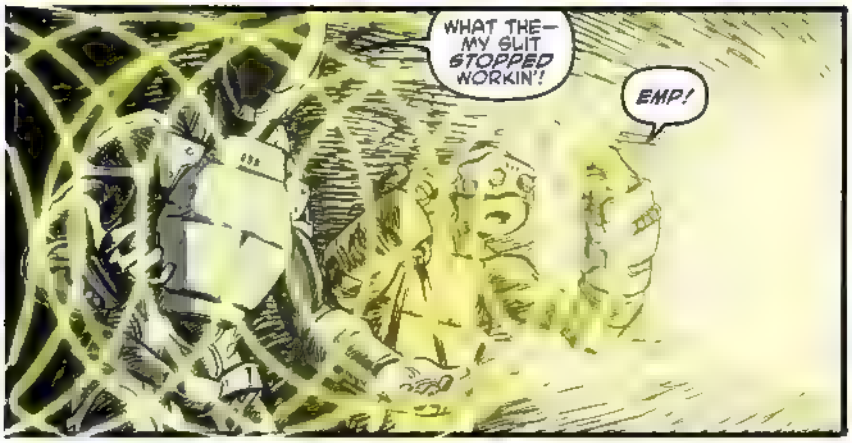
CHECK IT OUT, TURK. THE MUTANT WANTS TO FIGHT US WITH A GLOW STICK.
STUPID
STUPID? HARDLY.
KRZ
AND THIS IS WHERE YOU MIGHT BE A LITTLE SURPRISED.
OR A LOT.
SNKKKZZ
HOW'D HE DO THAT?
I... DON'T KNOW.
NOT BAD FOR A "GLOW STICK," HUH?

"WAIT 'TILL YOU SEE OUR OTHER TRICKS."
YO!
HANDS OFF THE TRUCK.
WHA—
KZZAKK
IT'S A LOANER.
HRRGK!
WHO... WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
ME?
I'M NOBODY.
GOD, I LOVE SAYIN' THAT.

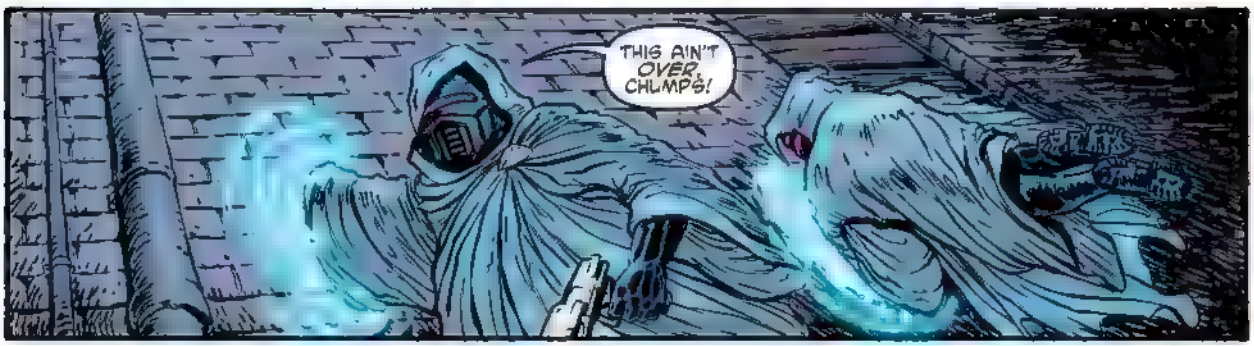
GAHHH!
FOLK
IT WAS GETTING A LITTLE TOO CRAMPED N THERE.
YOU LITTLE—
NUH-UH...
UNF!
GOTTA LOVE SCIENCE, HEY?
WORD.

SO, YOU PUNKS GOT YOURSELVES SOME UPGRADES, HUH?
BIG WHOOP.

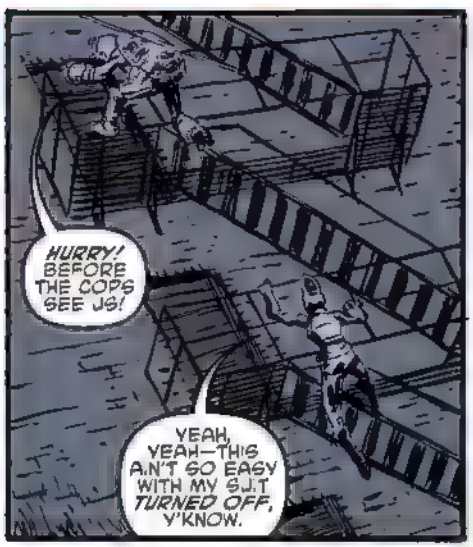
SLAM
YOU AIN'T THE ONLY ONES!


WHAT THE— MY SUIT STOPPED WORKIN'!
EMP!

WE OOO
WE OOO


THIS AIN'T OVER, CHUMPS!

IT IS TONIGHT
TIME TO GO HOME, ANGEL.


HURRY! BEFORE THE COPS SEE US!
YEAH, YEAH—THIS AIN'T SO EASY WITH MY SUIT TURNED OFF, Y'KNOW.

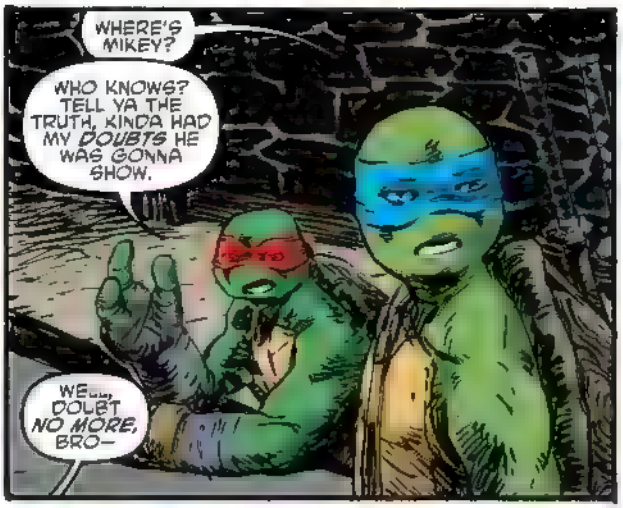
YOU SEE ANYTHING?
JUST ANOTHER WILD GOOSE CHASE, MAN.

UNF!
KRAK
HYAH!
VERY GOOD, JENNIKA. YOU MET MY KATSUGI MEN WITH DEBANA WAZA.
I CAN TELL YOU'VE BEEN TRAINING WITH MASTER SPLINTER.
OW
THANK YOU, CHUNIN, BUT IT WAS A FORTUNATE COUNTER ON MY PART, NOTHING MORE.

DON'T SELL YOURSELF SHORT. I'VE *SEEN* YOU IN ACTION—
—YOU'RE AN *EXCELLENT* FIGHTER.
NOT EXCELLENT ENOUGH.
LISTEN—YOU'RE ONLY *WASTING* PRECIOUS TIME AND ENERGY IF YOU KEEP *BLAMING YOURSELF* FOR WHAT HAPPENED WITH ALOPEX.
KITSUNE'S MIND GAMES HAD *EVERYONE* IN A FLUX DURING THAT BATTLE, INCLUDING MY BROTHERS.*
BUT—
NO BUTS. IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT. IF ANYTHING, YOU SHOULD BE COMMENDED FOR HOLDING BACK AGAINST ALOPEX THE WAY YOU DID.
THOSE SCARS WILL *HEAL*, JENNIKA, YOU'LL SEE.
ALL OF THEM.
NOW, COME ON—WE'VE GOT A *MEETING* TO GET TO.
JENNY
WHAT'S THAT?
BEFORE I JOINED THE FOOT, MY... MY FAMILY CALLED ME *JENNY*.
JENNY, *HUH?* WELL, LOOKS LIKE THAT'S WHAT *I'LL* BE CALLING YOU FROM NOW ON, THEN.
BECAUSE FAR AS *I'M* CONCERNED...

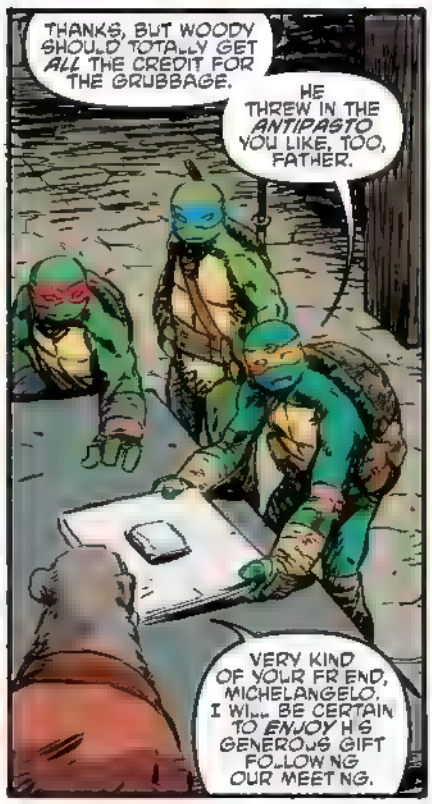
"...YOU ARE FAMILY"
'BOUT TIME YOU GET HERE, LEO.
SORRY. WE WERE TRAINING.
REALLY? YOU? I NEVER WOULDA GUESSED.
ALMOST GOT IT...

...AND THERE!
PHEW. FINALLY.
I WAS STARTIN' TO THINK I'D BE STUCK INSIDE THAT THING FOREVER.

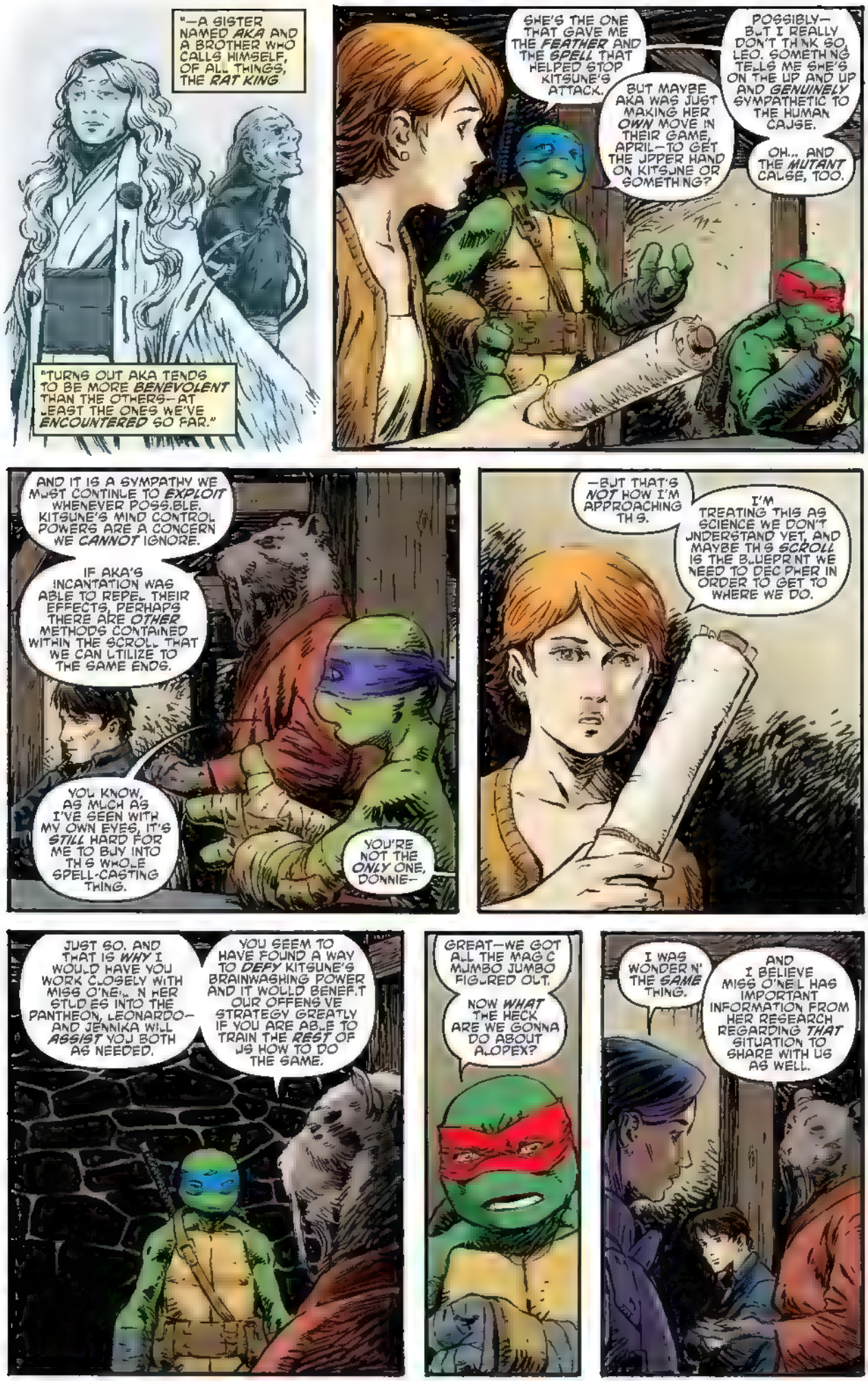

WHERE'S MIKEY?
WHO KNOWS? TELL YA THE TRUTH, KINDA HAD MY DOUBTS HE WAS GONNA SHOW.
WELL, DOUBT NO MORE, BRO—

—JUST HAD TO MAKE A QUICK DETOUR TO RUPERT'S ON THE WAY.
NOTHIN' SAYS FAMILY MEETING LIKE ONE OF WOODY'S TRIPLE-CHEESE AND ANCHOVY SPECIALS.
INDEED...

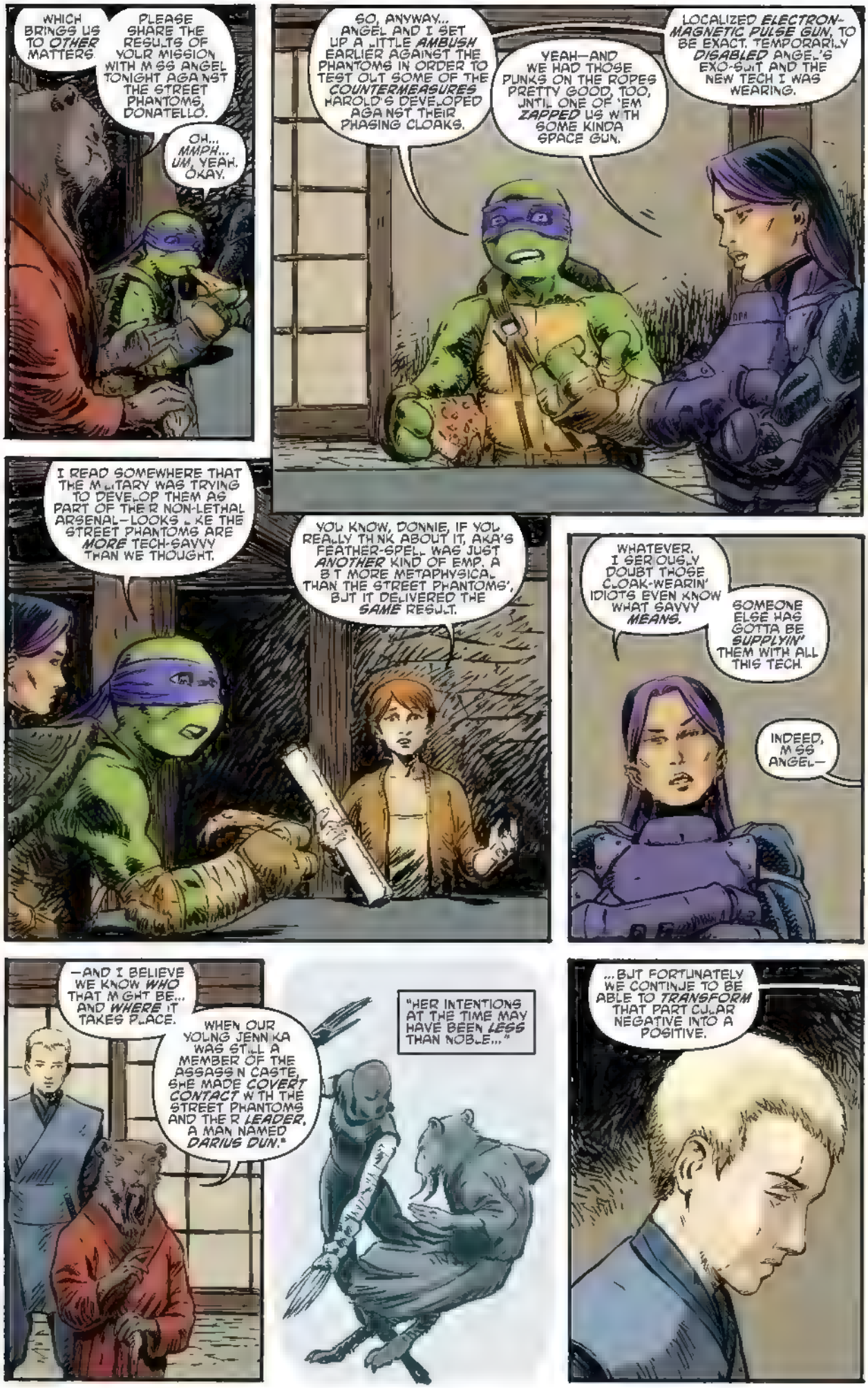
...AND WE TRULY APPRECIATE YOUR PRESENCE AT THIS GATHERING, AS WELL AS YOUR CONTRIBUTION OF SUSTENANCE, MY SON.


THANKS, BUT WOODY SHOULD TOTALLY GET ALL THE CREDIT FOR THE GRUBBAGE.
HE THREW IN THE ANTIPASTO YOU LIKE, TOO, FATHER.
VERY KIND OF YOUR FRIEND, MICHELANGELO. I WILL BE CERTAIN TO ENJOY HIS GENEROUS GIFT FOLLOWING OUR MEETING.

FOR NOW, HOWEVER, ALLOW ME TO EXPLAIN *WHY* I HAVE CALLED YOU ALL HERE.
AS YOU ARE ALL AWARE, THE RECENT *ATTACK* BY THE WITCH KITSUNE AGAINST OUR COMPOUND RESULTED IN A NUMBER OF *UNFORTUNATE LOSSES* ON OUR SIDE...
"... INCLUDING THE *DISAPPEARANCE* OF OUR FRIEND ALOPEX."
"THIS, COMBINED WITH THE *DANGERS* POSED AGAINST US—AND AGAINST THIS *CITY* WE CALL HOME—BY THE GROUP CALLED THE STREET PHANTOMS HAS *FORCED* THIS SOMEWHAT IMPROMPTU GATHERING TODAY."
SEE TMNT #59 & #60 - RC
WE *MUST* CHART AN AGGRESSIVELY DECISIVE COURSE OF *ACTION* AGAINST OUR ENEMIES MOVING FORWARD IF WE ARE TO HAVE *ANY* CHANCE OF DEFEATING THEM.
WHICH BRINGS US FIRST TO *KITSUNE* AND HER IMMORTAL SIBLINGS.
UNLIKE THE STREET PHANTOMS, WHO REMAIN A MYSTERY TO US, WE KNOW *PRECISELY* WHAT THE PANTHEON SEEKS TO ACCOMPLISH—
—WORLD DOMINANCE BY WAY OF THE *SINISTER GAME* THEY PLAY.
AS SUCH, WE MUST ENDEAVOR TO DEVELOP METHODS TO COUNTERACT THEIR MOVEMENTS, ALBEIT IN A FAR MORE *UNCONVENTIONAL* FASHION THAN AGAINST OUR OTHER ENEMIES.
AND AS MISS O'NEIL WILL EXPLAIN, WE MAY HAVE *UNEXPECTED HELP* IN THIS REGARD.
MISS O'NEIL?
THANKS, MASTER SPLINTER.
DURING OUR TRIP TO THE *SOUTHWEST* TO INVESTIGATE DR. MILLER'S NINJA SCROLL, CASEY AND I RAN INTO A COUPLE OF KITSUNE'S SIBLINGS—


"—A SISTER NAMED AKA AND A BROTHER WHO CALLS HIMSELF, OF ALL THINGS, THE RAT KING
"TURNS OUT AKA TENDS TO BE MORE BENEVOLENT THAN THE OTHERS—AT LEAST THE ONES WE'VE ENCOUNTERED SO FAR."
SHE'S THE ONE THAT GAVE ME THE FEATHER AND THE SPELL THAT HELPED STOP KITSUNE'S ATTACK.
BUT MAYBE AKA WAS JUST MAKING HER OWN MOVE IN THEIR GAME, APRIL—TO GET THE UPPER HAND ON KITSUNE OR SOMETHING?
POSSIBLY—BUT I REALLY DON'T THINK SO, LEO. SOMETHING TELLS ME SHE'S ON THE UP AND UP AND GENUINELY SYMPATHETIC TO THE HUMAN CAUSE.
OH... AND THE MUTANT CAUSE, TOO.
AND IT IS A SYMPATHY WE MUST CONTINUE TO EXPLOIT WHENEVER POSSIBLE. KITSUNE'S MIND CONTROL POWERS ARE A CONCERN WE CANNOT IGNORE.
IF AKA'S INCANTATION WAS ABLE TO REPEL THEIR EFFECTS, PERHAPS THERE ARE OTHER METHODS CONTAINED WITHIN THE SCROLL THAT WE CAN UTILIZE TO THE SAME ENDS.
YOU KNOW, AS MUCH AS I'VE SEEN WITH MY OWN EYES, IT'S STILL HARD FOR ME TO BUY INTO THIS WHOLE SPELL-CASTING THING.
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE, DONNIE—
—BUT THAT'S NOT HOW I'M APPROACHING THIS.
I'M TREATING THIS AS SCIENCE WE DON'T UNDERSTAND YET, AND MAYBE THIS SCROLL IS THE BLUEPRINT WE NEED TO DECIPHER IN ORDER TO GET TO WHERE WE DO.
JUST SO. AND THAT IS WHY I WOULD HAVE YOU WORK CLOSELY WITH MISS O'NEIL IN HER STUDIES INTO THE PANTHEON, LEONARDO—AND JENNIKA WILL ASSIST YOU BOTH AS NEEDED.
YOU SEEM TO HAVE FOUND A WAY TO DEFY KITSUNE'S BRAINWASHING POWER AND IT WOULD BENEFIT OUR OFFENSIVE STRATEGY GREATLY IF YOU ARE ABLE TO TRAIN THE REST OF US HOW TO DO THE SAME.
GREAT—WE GOT ALL THE MAGIC MUMBO JUMBO FIGURED OUT.
NOW WHAT THE HECK ARE WE GONNA DO ABOUT ALOPEX?
I WAS WONDERIN' THE SAME THING.
AND I BELIEVE MISS O'NEIL HAS IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM HER RESEARCH REGARDING THAT SITUATION TO SHARE WITH US AS WELL.

YES. I KNOW WHERE TO FIND ALOPEX.
WHAT?
WHEN I WAS DIGGING THROUGH THE FOOT ARCHIVES, I CAME ACROSS SOME OF THEIR SCIENTIFIC DATA, INCLUDING ALOPEX'S MEDICAL FILES, WHICH SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN DELIBERATELY HIDDEN AWAY—
"—TURNS OUT THE SCIENTISTS WHO MUTATED HER ALSO MICRO-CHIPPED HER DURING THE PROCESS. SOMEBODY—I'M GUESSING KITSUNE—DIDN'T WANT ALOPEX TO BE FOUND WHEN SHE LEFT THE FOOT.
"ANYWAY, I PUNCHED THE INFO INTO ONE OF THEIR TRACKING COMPUTERS AND IT LOOKS LIKE SHE'S HEADING NORTHWEST... AND FAST."
ALASKA.
HUH?
ALOPEX TOLD ME SHE'S FROM ALASKA. THAT'S WHERE THE FOOT CAPTURED HER BEFORE THEY, YOU KNOW... CHANGED HER.
I BET SHE'S FEELIN' ASHAMED BY EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED AND PROBABLY TRYIN' TO GET AS FAR AWAY AS SHE CAN BECAUSE OF IT.
BUT THAT'S BULL! ST NKIN' KITSUNE HAD HER ALL SCREWED UP, JUST LIKE THE REST OF US. IT WASN'T HER FAULT.
NO, MY SON, IT WAS NOT, AND WE WILL NOT ABANDON ALOPEX NOW IN HER TIME OF CONFUSION.
THAT IS WHY I WOULD HAVE YOU—AND MISS ANGEL, IF SHE IS WILLING—GO TO OUR LOST FRIEND AND BRING HER HOME.
WILLING? YOU KIDDIN'? WHEN DO WE START?
NOT SOON ENOUGH.
PERHAPS SOONER THAN YOU THINK, RAPHAEL—
—I HAVE TASKED ONE OF OUR BEST PILOTS TO SPEED YOU ON YOUR WAY JUST AS SOON AS YOU ARE BOTH READY. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE.
ALOPEX IS FAMILY AND AN INTEGRAL PART OF THIS CLAN AND SHE MUST BE RETURNED TO US QUICKLY.
HER WARRIOR SKILLS WILL BE VITAL TO OUR SUCCESS IN THE MULTIPLE CONFLICTS WE FACE

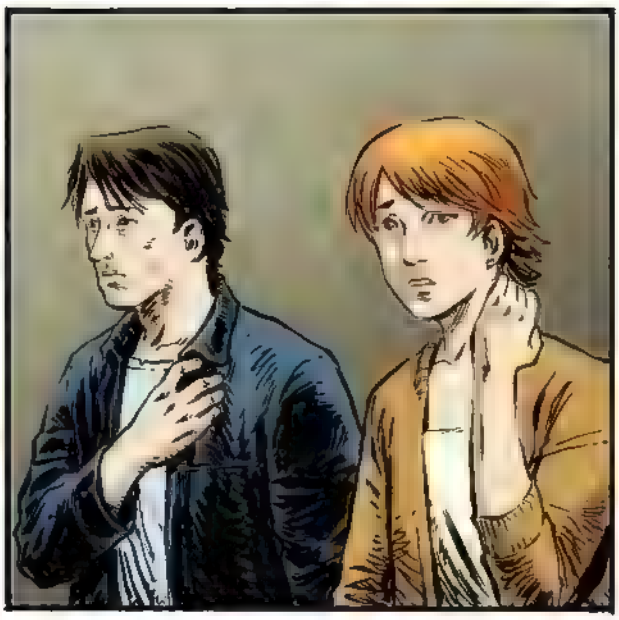

WHICH BRINGS US TO *OTHER* MATTERS.
PLEASE SHARE THE RESULTS OF YOUR MISSION WITH MISS ANGEL TONIGHT AGAINST THE STREET PHANTOMS, DONATELLO.
OH... *MMPH*... *UM*, YEAH. OKAY.
SO, ANYWAY... ANGEL AND I SET UP A LITTLE *AMBUSH* EARLIER AGAINST THE PHANTOMS IN ORDER TO TEST OUT SOME OF THE *COUNTERMEASURES* HAROLD'S DEVELOPED AGAINST THEIR PHASING CLOAKS.
YEAH—AND WE HAD THOSE PUNKS ON THE ROPES PRETTY GOOD, TOO, UNTIL ONE OF 'EM *ZAPPED* US WITH SOME KINDA SPACE GUN.
LOCALIZED *ELECTRON-MAGNETIC PULSE GUN*, TO BE EXACT. TEMPORARILY *DISABLED* ANGEL'S EXO-SUIT AND THE NEW TECH I WAS WEARING.
I READ SOMEWHERE THAT THE MILITARY WAS TRYING TO DEVELOP THEM AS PART OF THEIR NON-LETHAL ARSENAL—LOOKS LIKE THE STREET PHANTOMS ARE *MORE* TECH-SAVVY THAN WE THOUGHT.
YOU KNOW, DONNIE, IF YOU REALLY THINK ABOUT IT, AKA'S FEATHER-SPELL WAS JUST *ANOTHER* KIND OF EMP. A BIT MORE METAPHYSICAL THAN THE STREET PHANTOMS', BUT IT DELIVERED THE *SAME* RESULT.
WHATEVER. I SERIOUSLY DOUBT THOSE CLOAK-WEARIN' IDIOTS EVEN KNOW WHAT SAVVY *MEANS*.
SOMEONE ELSE HAS GOTTA BE *SUPPLYIN'* THEM WITH ALL THIS TECH.
INDEED, MISS ANGEL—
—AND I BELIEVE WE KNOW *WHO* THAT MIGHT BE... AND *WHERE* IT TAKES PLACE.
WHEN OUR YOUNG JENNIKA WAS STILL A MEMBER OF THE ASSASSIN CASTE, SHE MADE *COVERT CONTACT* WITH THE STREET PHANTOMS AND THEIR *LEADER*, A MAN NAMED *DARIUS DUN*."
"HER INTENTIONS AT THE TIME MAY HAVE BEEN *LESS* THAN NOBLE..."
...BUT FORTUNATELY WE CONTINUE TO BE ABLE TO *TRANSFORM* THAT PARTICULAR NEGATIVE INTO A POSITIVE.

SO, WHO'S THIS DARIUS DUN CHUMP SUPPOSED TO BE, ANYWAYS?
AN EXCELLENT QUESTION, RAPHAEL, AND ONE WE DO NOT HAVE A COMPLETE ANSWER TO AS OF YET.
"OUTWARDLY, HE WOULD APPEAR TO BE A MODESTLY SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN..."
...BUT I BELIEVE THAT MERELY TO BE A CLEVERLY DESIGNED FACADE MEANT TO HIDE A FAR DARKER REALITY.
DONATELLO, I WOULD LIKE YOU TO CONTINUE TO WORK WITH HAROLD LILJA TO INCREASE THE FUNCTIONALITY AND AVAILABILITY OF OUR TECHNICAL ASSETS.
WHOEVER DARIUS DUN TRULY IS, YOUR BATTLE WITH HIS STREET PHANTOMS TONIGHT FURTHER ESTABLISHES OUR IMMEDIATE NEED FOR MORE ADVANCED COUNTERMEASURES—
—AS WELL AS THE WEAPONS THAT WILL ALLOW THE FOOT CLAN TO STRIKE PRE-EMPTIVELY AND MERCILESSLY.
UM... EXCUSE ME.
FATHER, I WANT ALOPEX BACK JUST AS BAD AS ANYONE HERE, BUT TO HELP HER, 'CAUSE THAT'S WHAT I REALLY THINK SHE NEEDS RIGHT NOW MORE THAN BEIN' ANOTHER SOLDIER IN YOUR ARMY.
MICHELANGELO, OF COURSE WE WILL TEND TO ALOPEX'S TRAUMA FIRST.
WHY? SO YOU CAN STICK HER RIGHT BACK IN THE WAR TO GET HURT AGAIN?
LET'S BE HONEST—THE WHOLE TIME WE'VE BEEN HERE, YOU'VE BEEN SAYIN' THINGS LIKE "EXPLOIT" AND "TECHNICAL ASSETS" AND "ADVANCED COUNTERMEASURES" AND "PRE-EMPTIVELY," AND IT TOTALLY SUCKS.
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO "PROTECTION" AND "DEFENDING" AND "HONOR"... AND ALL THE OTHER STUFF YOU USED TO SAY AGAINST THE FOOT?

WHAT'S YOUR POINT, MIKEY? WE *ARE* THE FOOT—WHY WOULD MASTER SPLINTER SPEAK AGAINST HIS OWN CLAN?
THEN *WHY* ARE YOU HERE?
NO, LEO—*YOU GUYS* ARE THE FOOT. I DON'T WANT *ANYTHING* TO DO WITH IT.
I'M HERE BECAUSE *YOU* INVITED ME... AND BECAUSE I THOUGHT WE WERE HAVIN' A FAMILY MEETING LIKE THE OLD DAYS, *NOT* SOME STUPID WAR COUNCIL!
WHAT'S SO STUPID ABOUT IMPLEMENTING A *SOUND* STRATEGY? WOULD YOU RATHER WE *IGNORE* THE DANGERS AND JUST LET THEM CONTROL US?
TALK ABOUT STUPID.
NO—STUPID'S *ATTACKING FIRST!* STUPID IS *LOOKIN'* FOR TROUBLE INSTEAD OF *STOPPIN'* IT!
COME ON—SAVE THE *DRAMA*, MIKE!
THIS IS SERIOUS BUSINESS... AND IT'S WAY PAST TIME WE ALL GROW UP AND *DEAL* WITH IT LIKE ADULTS!
I—
FUNNY 'CAUSE THAT'S *EXACTLY* WHAT I THOUGHT I WAS DOIN'
YOU KNOW WHAT... FORGET IT—I *KNEW* COMIN' HERE WAS GONNA BE A *MISTAKE*. I'M GOIN' HOME... TO THE *LAIR*.
I NEED SOME MORE TIME ALONE TO FIGURE OUT WHY, IF WE *BEAT* THE SHREDDER...
...IT STILL FEELS LIKE *HE'S* WINNIN' AND *WE'RE* LOSIN'.

YES, WELL... PERHAPS IT IS TIME TO *CONCLUDE* THIS GATHERING.
YOU ALL HAVE YOUR INSTRUCTIONS—I TRUST EACH OF YOU WILL FULFILL THEM TO THE *BEST* OF YOUR ABILITIES.

OH... HI, CASEY. IT'S... IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU.
YEAH. SAME.

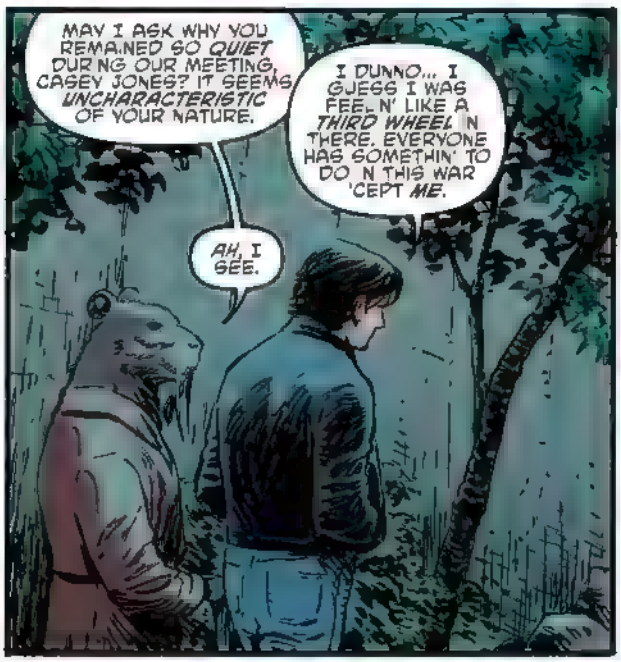


WELL, *UM*... I BETTER BE GOING. LOTS OF WORK TO DO.
SURE. NO PROBLEM.

CASEY JONES?

WOULD YOU BE SO KIND AS TO *JOIN* ME FOR A WALK?

THANK YOU FOR ACCOMPANYING, CHILD. I FIND THAT OUR NEW ABODE CAN BECOME... *STIFLING* AT TIMES.
REALLY? THAT SEEMS KINDA *WEIRD* COMIN' FROM A GUY WHO USED TO LIVE IN THE SEWER.
IT'S RATHER *IRONIC*, IS IT NOT?


MAY I ASK WHY YOU REMAINED SO *QUIET* DURING OUR MEETING, CASEY JONES? IT SEEMS *UNCHARACTERISTIC* OF YOUR NATURE.
I DUNNO... I GUESS I WAS FEELIN' LIKE A *THIRD WHEEL* IN THERE. EVERYONE HAS SOMETHIN' TO DO IN THIS WAR 'CEPT *ME*.
AH, I SEE.

AND THEN THE WHOLE THING WITH *MIKEY* WAS KINDA—NO OFFENSE—AWKWARD.
YES. MICHELANGELO *ADAMANTLY* CONTINUES TO MAKE A PERSONAL DECISION WE MUST RESPECT.
STILL... *BUMMER*, HUH?
JUST SO.

PLEASE FORGIVE MY INTRUSIVENESS, BUT I WOULD HAVE YOU KNOW THAT I AM *FULLY AWARE* OF YOUR MOST RECENT TROUBLES WITH MISS O'NEIL. I AM *SORRY* FOR YOUR SEPARATION.
YEAH, WELL... *STORY* OF MY LIFE, RIGHT?

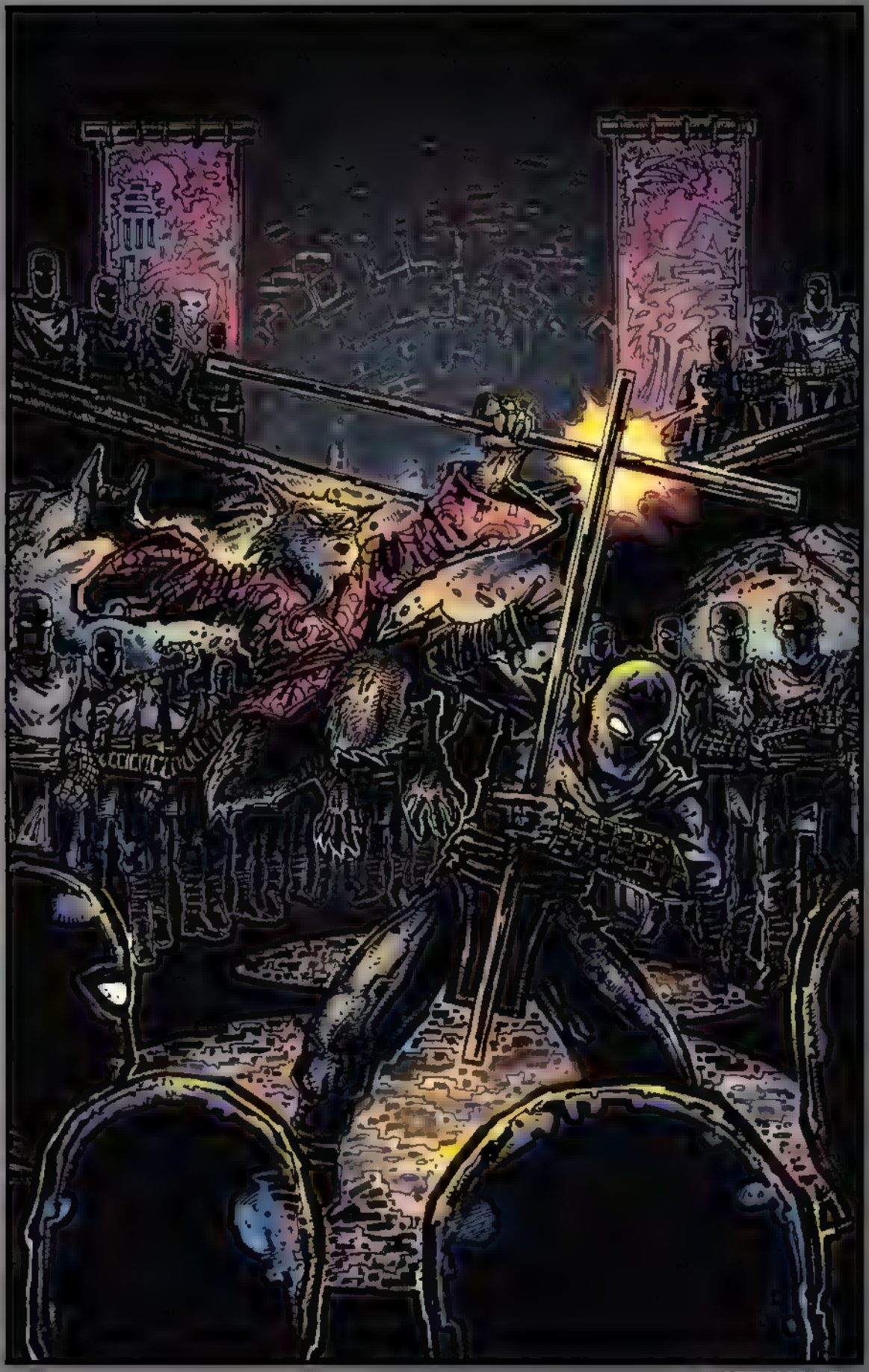
CAN I ASK YOU A *PERSONAL QUESTION*, MASTER SPLINTER?
OF COURSE, CHILD.

DO YOU REGRET *KILLIN'* THE SHREDDER?
HM. THERE IS NO EASY ANSWER TO *THAT* QUESTION, I'M AFRAID.

IN TRUTH, I ABHOR VIOLENCE OF ANY KIND—EVEN AGAINST MY MOST FERVENT ENEMIES. BUT IN TWO LIFETIMES I HAVE LEARNED THAT MY REVULSION FOR PHYSICAL CONFRONTATION MUST OFTEN BE WEIGHED AGAINST UNFORTUNATE NECESSITY.
OROKU SAKI WAS VERY MUCH A BROTHER TO ME. BUT AS THE SHREDDER, HE POSED A DEADLY THREAT TO MY FAMILY AND I COULD NOT ALLOW THAT TO STAND, NO MATTER MY PERSONAL MISGIVINGS...
...NO MATTER THE COST
YOU ASK ME IF I REGRET KILLING THE SHREDDER. PERHAPS THE MORE APPROPRIATE QUESTION IS DO I REGRET DOING WHAT I HAD TO DO TO PROTECT THOSE I LOVE MOST IN THIS WORLD.
THE ANSWER, QUITE SIMPLY, IS NO... I DO NOT. AND IF FACED WITH THE SAME TERRIBLE DECISION, I WOULD DO IT AGAIN—NO MATTER THE COST.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT I AM SAYING TO YOU, CASEY JONES?
YEAH... YEAH, I THINK I DO.
YER SAYIN' IT'S A DIRTY JOB... BUT SOMEONE'S GOTTA DO IT.
YES, DIRTY...
...AND EXTREMELY DANGEROUS.
IT IS CERTAINLY NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART.
AND THAT IS WHY YOU AND I ARE OUT HERE, YOUNG MAN—

"—TO DISCUSS YOUR CRUCIAL ROLE IN THIS WAR."
DAMN YOU, WOMAN. WHY?
SIGH
COO-TOY.

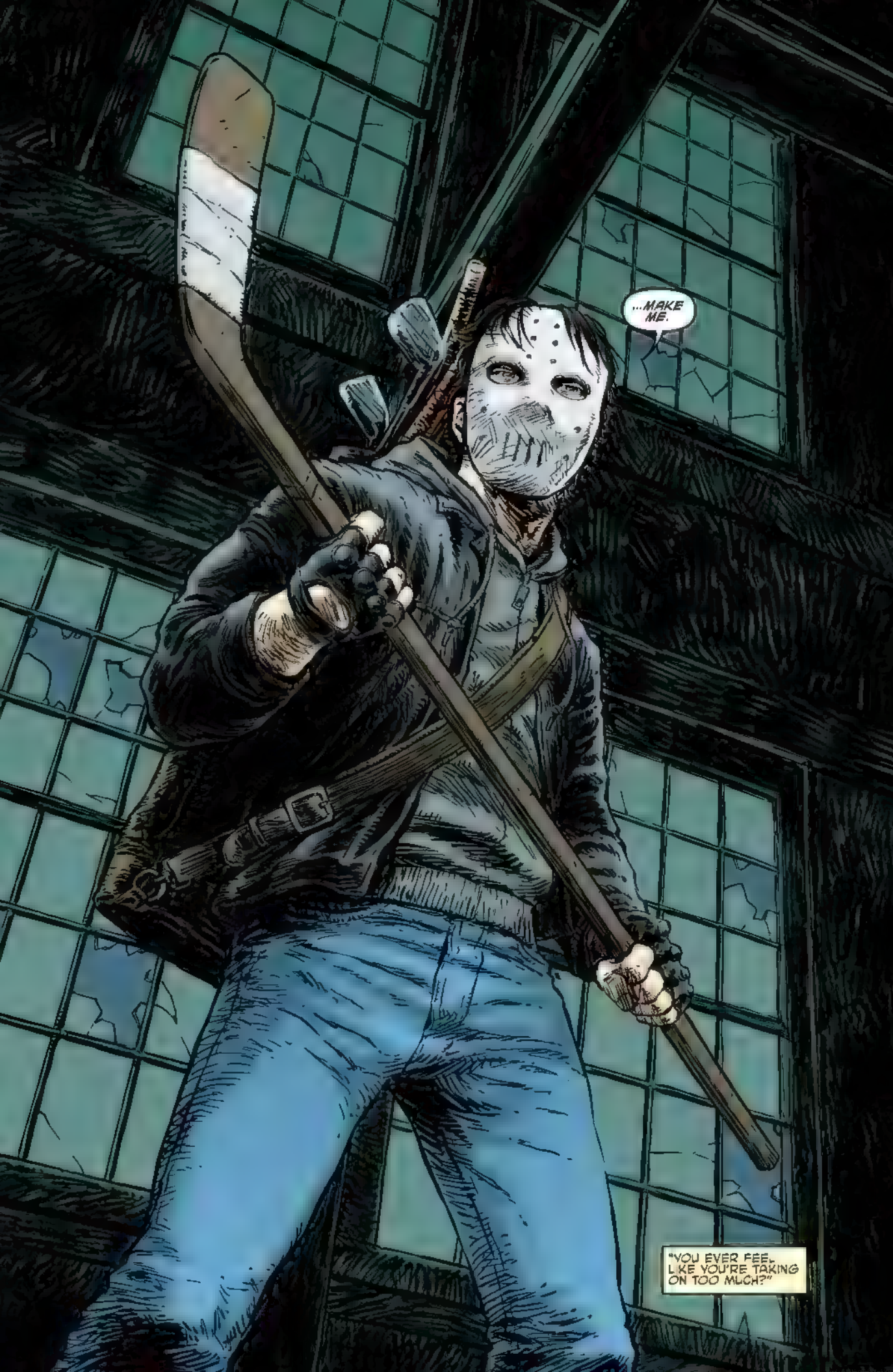
WHO—
GYAH!
ALMOST AS COOL AS OURS.
THE INVENTOR SAYS HI.



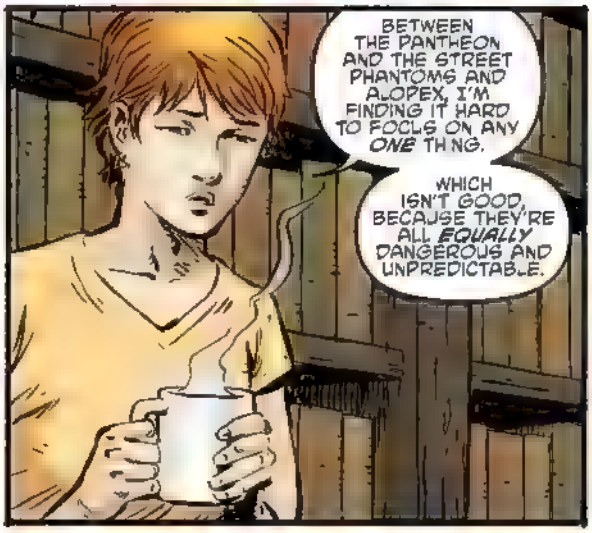
ART BY KEVIN EASTMAN
COLORS BY TONI BARER

ISSUE #62

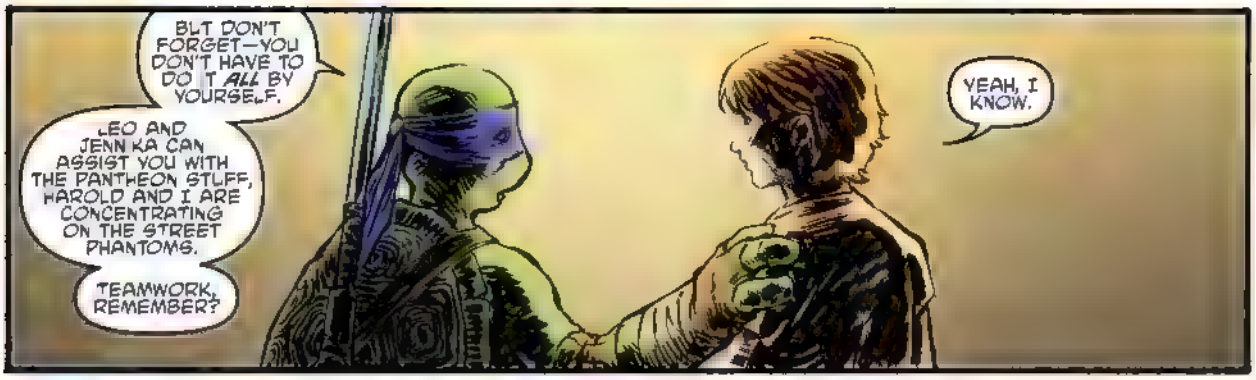
HOW PATHETIC IS THIS?
WHO THE HELL...?
YEAH. EXACTLY WHAT I WAS WONDERIN'—
—WHO THE HELL'RE YOU ID OTS SUPPOSED TO BE?
I MEAN, I WAS EXPECTIN' TO FIND THE PURPLE DRAGONS...
...NOT A BUNCH OF BURNT-OUT POSERS.
GUESS YOU NEED SOMEONE IN CHARGE TO STRAIGHTEN YOU LOSERS UP.
OH... IT'S YOU. GET LOST.
WE'RE DONE WITH YOU AND YOUR OLD MAN.
MAYBE.
MAYBE NOT.
SMASH
YOU DEAF OR SOMETH'N'?!
I SAID GET THE HELL OUTTA HERE, JONES.
AND I'M SAY.IN'...


...MAKE ME.
"YOU EVER FEEL LIKE YOU'RE TAKING ON TOO MUCH?"

I SWEAR, DONNIE, IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE MIRACLE OF COFFEE, I'D HAVE GONE INTO DEEP HIBERNATION A *LONG* TIME AGO.
I WOULDN'T BLAME YOU IF YOU DID, APRIL.
THERE'S AN AMAZING AMOUNT OF *DATA* TO SIFT THROUGH HERE.
YEAH. AND *ALL* OF IT WEIRD.


BETWEEN THE PANTHEON AND THE STREET PHANTOMS AND ALOPEX, I'M FINDING IT HARD TO FOCUS ON ANY *ONE* THING.
WHICH ISN'T GOOD, BECAUSE THEY'RE ALL *EQUALLY* DANGEROUS AND UNPREDICTABLE.

NOT TO MENTION THE UTROMS AND PROFESSOR HONEYCUTT AND LEATHERHEAD AND WHO-KNOWS-WHAT'S-NEXT.
I *HEAR* YA, APRIL.

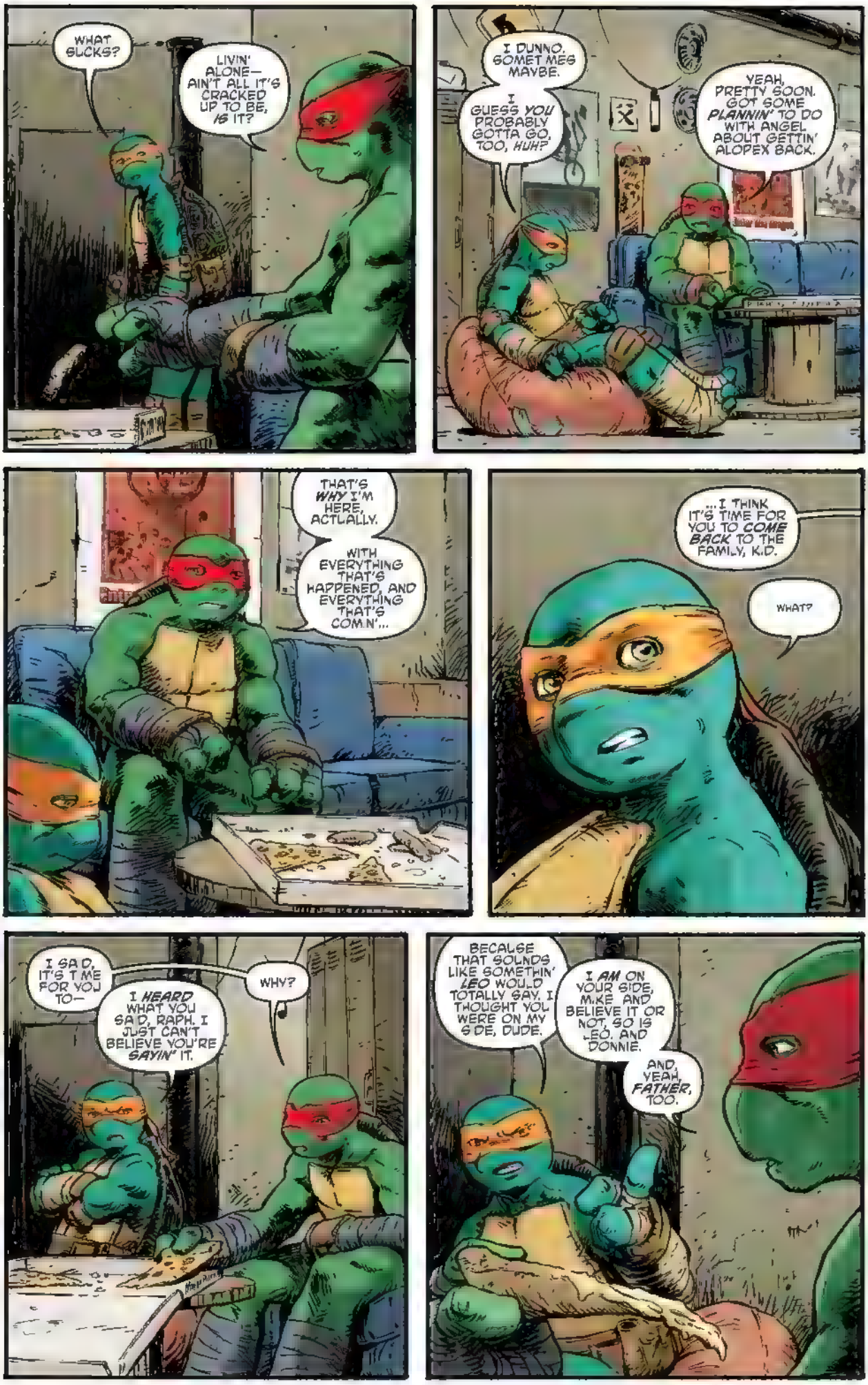

BUT DON'T FORGET—YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT *ALL* BY YOURSELF.
LEO AND JENNIKA CAN ASSIST YOU WITH THE PANTHEON STUFF, HAROLD AND I ARE CONCENTRATING ON THE STREET PHANTOMS.
TEAMWORK, REMEMBER?
YEAH, I KNOW.

SPEAKING OF TEAM PLAYERS, *HAROLD'S* IGNORING HIS PHONE AGAIN, SO I'M GONNA HEAD OVER THERE AND SEE IF HE'S HEARD FROM MARIELL TODAY.
I'M ANXIOUS TO FIND OUT HOW PROFESSOR HONEYCUTT'S *REPAIRS* ARE COMING ALONG ON BURNOW ISLAND.
BY THE WAY, ANY WORD FROM *CASEY* SINCE OUR FAMILY MEETING?*
See TMNT #61 - D.C.
NO, NOTHING.
BUT WE'VE BARELY SAID TWO WORDS TO EACH OTHER SINCE WE BROKE UP—

"... I HONESTLY HAVE NO CLUE WHAT HE'S UP TO THESE DAYS."
"SO... WHAT'S NEXT?"

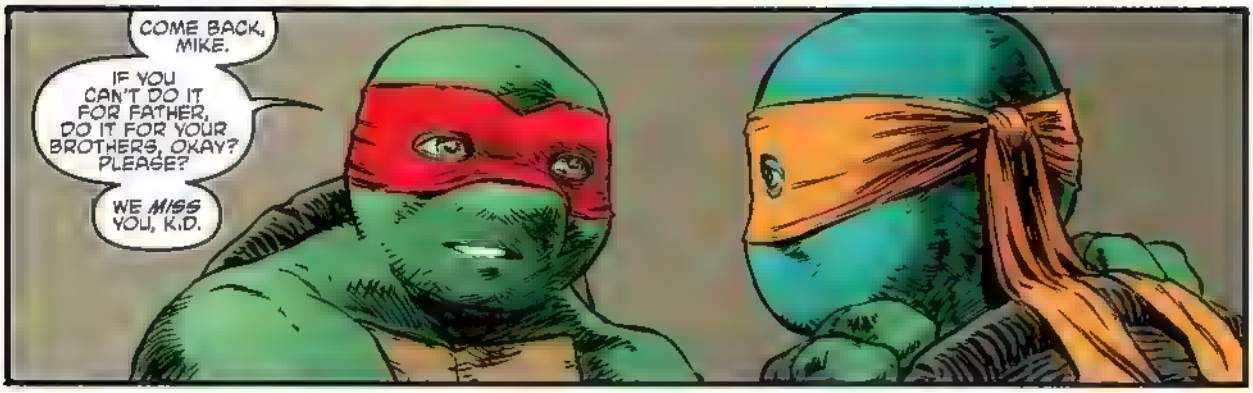
NEXT, MR JAMMER?
YEAH, BOSS...
...WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO WHEN HE WAKES UP?
WE ARE NOT GOING TO DO ANYTHING. I AM GO NG TO NEGOTIATE.
NEGOTIATE?
YES, I INTEND TO OFFER OUR NEW FR END GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT
BUT WHAT IF HE DON'T WANT THE JOB, MR DLN? I MEAN, HE AIN'T GONNA BE TOO HAPPY WHEN HE WAKES UP, I'LL BET.
OH, YE OF LITTLE FAITH.
YOU SHOULD KNOW FROM EXPER ENCE THAT I WOULD NOT ENTER INTO MPORTANT BUSINESS TA.KS WITHOUT SER OUS LEVERAGE TO BACK ME UP.
FETCH ME THE INVENTOR.

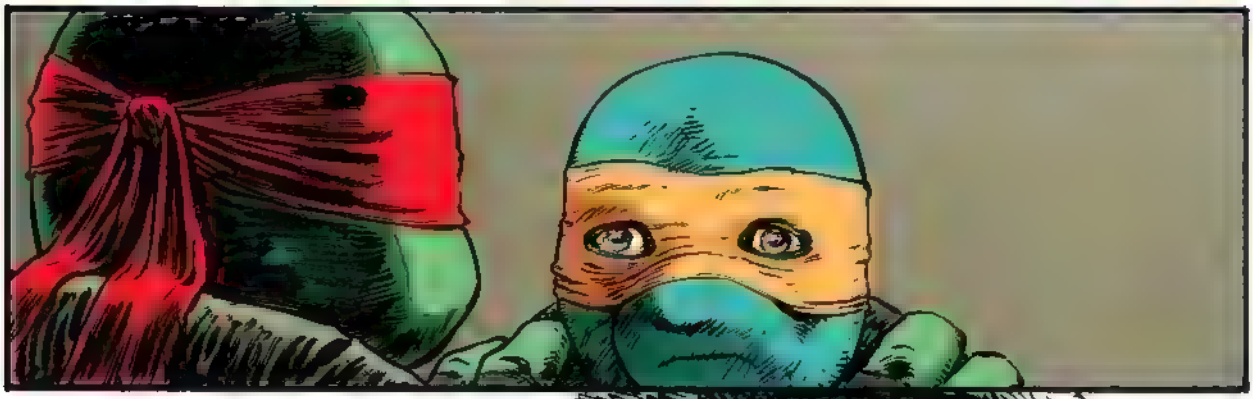
"MAN, WOODY, THIS IS SOME TASTY P.E.."
RUPERT'S
...DON'T KNOW HOW YOU DO IT, BUT I'M GLAD YOU DO.
MUCHO APPRECIATED, RAPH, BUT OL' MAN RUPERT'S THE DUDE WITH THE MAGIC TOUCH.
I'M JUST AN UNWORTHY APPRENTICE TO HIS PIZZA-MAKING WIZARDRY.
AND IT LOOKS LIKE HE AIN'T THE ONLY ONE WITH SOME BITCHIN MAGIC. YOU SURE TRANSFORMED YOUR CRIB INTO THE ULTIMATE MAN-CAVE, MIKESTER. I'M IMPRESSED.
AW, THANKS, BRO. IT'S GREAT HAVIN' YOU GUYS HERE TO SHARE IT, TOO.
AND MUCH AS I'D LIKE TO STAY, DUDE, I GOTTA MAKE TRACKS. I'M SUPPOSED TO BE IN THE KITCHEN TONIGHT, NOT DOIN' DELIVERIES.
I BETTER GET BACK BEFORE OL' MAN RUPERT JOES HIS SORCERY TO TURN ME INTO A FROG.
OR MAYBE A TURTLE?
HEY, I'D TOTALLY DIG THAT. TURTLES RULE.
CATCH YOU LATER, AMIGO.
YOU KNOW IT
SUCKS, DON'T IT?

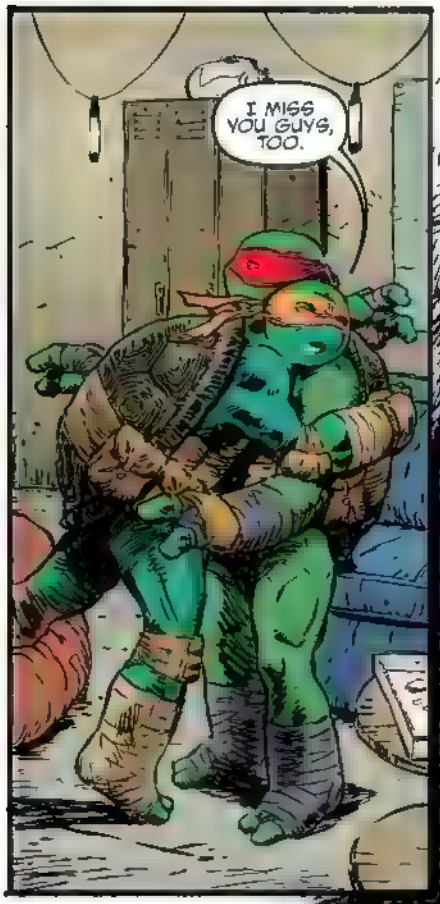

WHAT SUCKS?
LIVIN' ALONE— AIN'T ALL IT'S CRACKED UP TO BE, IS IT?
I DUNNO. SOMETIMES MAYBE.
I GUESS YOU PROBABLY GOTTA GO, TOO, HUH?
YEAH, PRETTY SOON. GOT SOME PLANNIN' TO DO WITH ANGEL ABOUT GETTIN' ALOPEX BACK.
THAT'S WHY I'M HERE, ACTUALLY.
WITH EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED, AND EVERYTHING THAT'S COMIN'...
...I THINK IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO COME BACK TO THE FAMILY, K.D.
WHAT?
I SAID, IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO—
I HEARD WHAT YOU SAID, RAPH. I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE SAYIN' IT.
WHY?
BECAUSE THAT SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHIN' LEO WOULD TOTALLY SAY. I THOUGHT YOU WERE ON MY SIDE, DUDE.
I AM ON YOUR SIDE, MIKE AND BELIEVE IT OR NOT, SO IS LEO, AND DONNIE.
AND, YEAH, FATHER, TOO.

FATHER? THAT'S TOTAL BULL, RAPH.
IF HE WAS REALLY ON OUR SIDE, HE WOULDN'T HAVE MADE US JOIN THE FOOT WITH HIM AND... AND CROSSED THE LINE LIKE HE DID.
FER CRYIN' OUT LOUD, MIKE, YOU EVEN HEARIN' YOURSELF, MAN?!
SPLAT
NOBODY GOT MADE TO JOIN THE FOOT—IF THAT WAS TRUE, INSTEAD OF ME AND YOU SITTIN' HERE EATIN' PIZZA, WE'D BE AT FOOT HEADQUARTERS DOIN' FOOT STUFF RIGHT NOW.
BUT WE AIN'T 'CAUSE FATHER LET YOU TAKE OFF AND DO WHAT YOU HAD TO DO TO DEAL WITH HIM KILLIN' SHREDDER AND BECOMIN' THE FOOT MASTER.
C'MON, BRO—BE REAL. YOU THINK FATHER LIKES BEIN' THE BOSS OF THE FOOT? HECK, YOU THINK ANY OF US LIKE BEIN' IN THAT MESS? NO WAY.
BUT IF THAT'S WHAT IT TAKES TO KEEP KITSUNE AND THOSE STREET PHANTOM PUNKS AND ALL THE OTHER NIMRODS LIKE THEM IN CHECK, THEN THAT'S JUST THE WAY IT'S GOTTA BE.
FATHER DID IT TO PROTECT US FROM SHREDDER... AND TO PROTECT THIS CITY FROM THE FOOT.
IMAGINE WHAT COULDA HAPPENED IF HE DIDN'T TAKE OVER WHEN SHREDDER KICKED IT.
YOU GOTTA STOP THINKIN' FATHER CROSSED SOMELINE TO PUNISH US, MIKE, 'CAUSE HE DIDN'T.
WHY DOES IT FEEL SO WRONG, THEN?
WE'RE IN THE FOOT CLAN NOW, MIKEY—IT AIN'T SUPPOSED TO FEEL RIGHT.
BUT IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

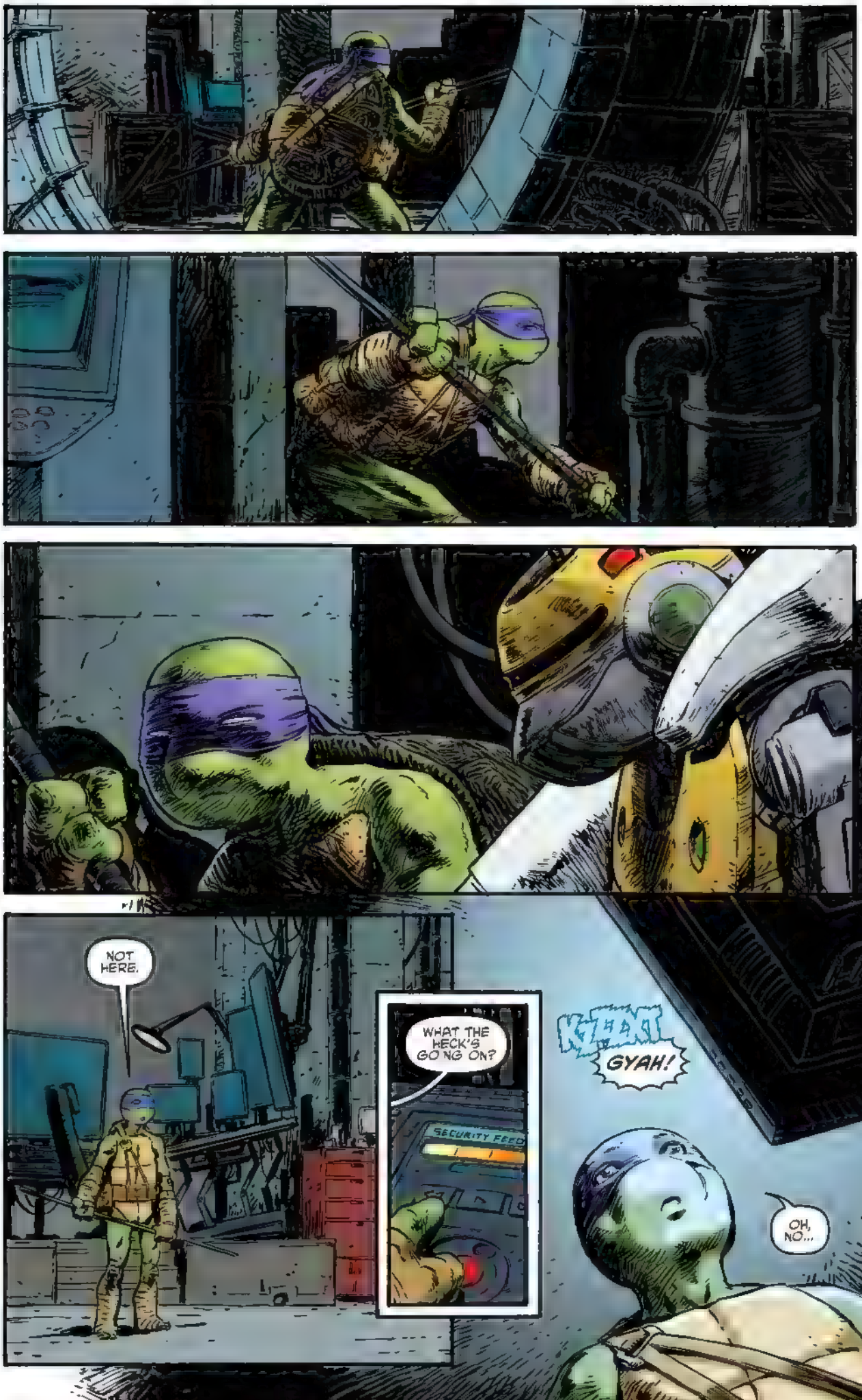
WE ALL WISH WE COULD GO BACK TO THE OLD DAYS... ALL OF US HERE TOGETHER IN THE LAIR.
PROBLEM IS, IT AIN'T JUST ABOUT US ANYMORE.
WE GOT A BIGGER FAMILY AND LOTS OF GOOD FRIENDS... AND, LIKE I SAID, THE WHOLE CITY TO WORRY ABOUT NOW.
SHOOT, THE WHOLE DAMN WORLD IF YOU REALLY THINK ABOUT IT.
BUT THAT DON'T MEAN WE STILL DON'T GOT EACH OTHER'S BACKS, LITTLE BRO.
AND RIGHT NOW, I NEED TO KNOW YOU GOT MINE 'CAUSE I'M GETTIN' READY TO LEAVE WITH ANGEL TO FIND ALOPEX.
AND I CAN'T DO THAT IF I DON'T KNOW THAT YOU AND LEO AND DONNIE ARE TAKIN' CARE OF EACH OTHER WHILE I'M GONE—
—AND THAT YOU'RE ALL TAKIN' CARE OF FATHER, TOO.

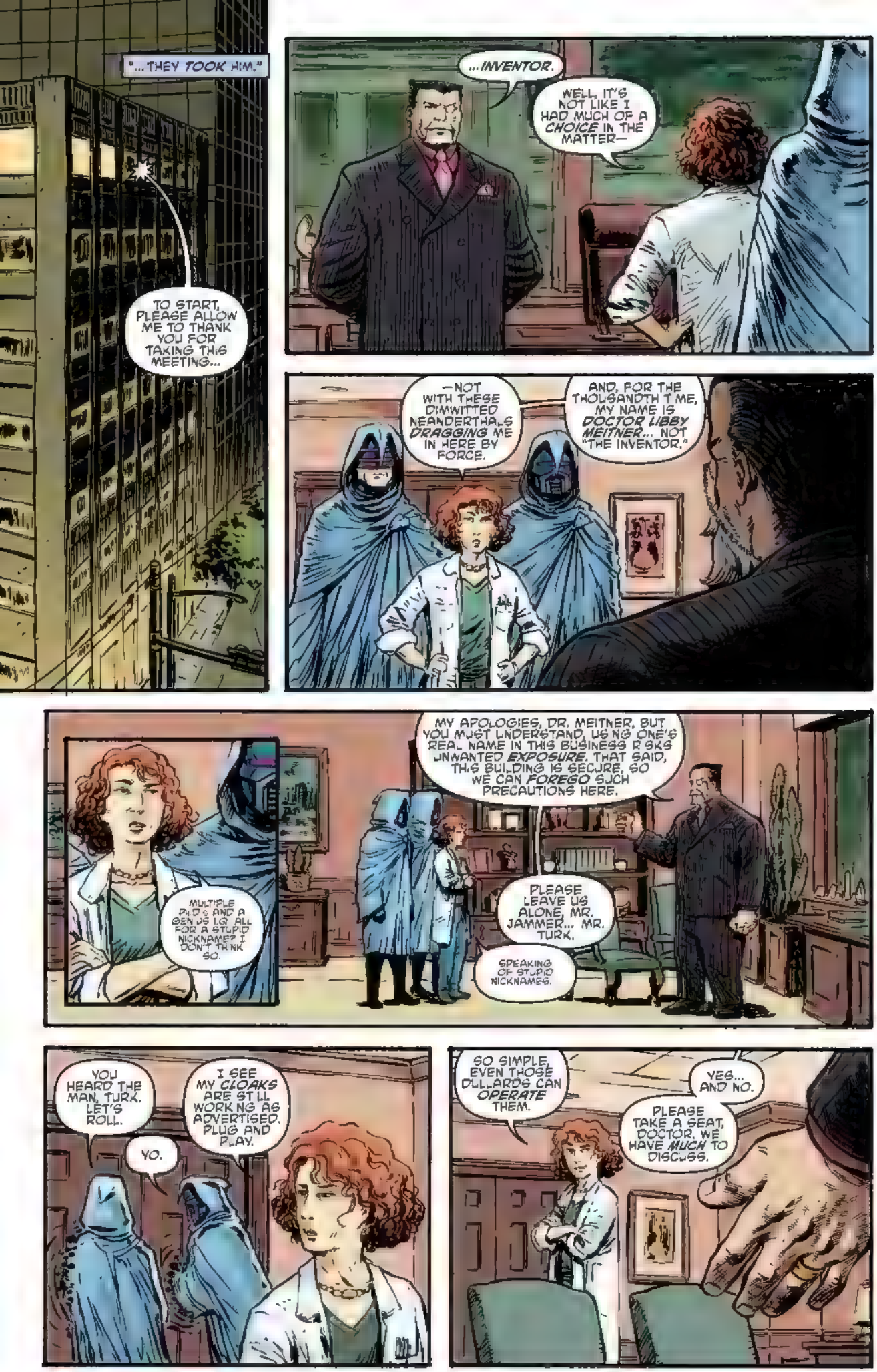

COME BACK, MIKE.
IF YOU CAN'T DO IT FOR FATHER, DO IT FOR YOUR BROTHERS, OKAY? PLEASE?
WE *MISS* YOU, K.D.



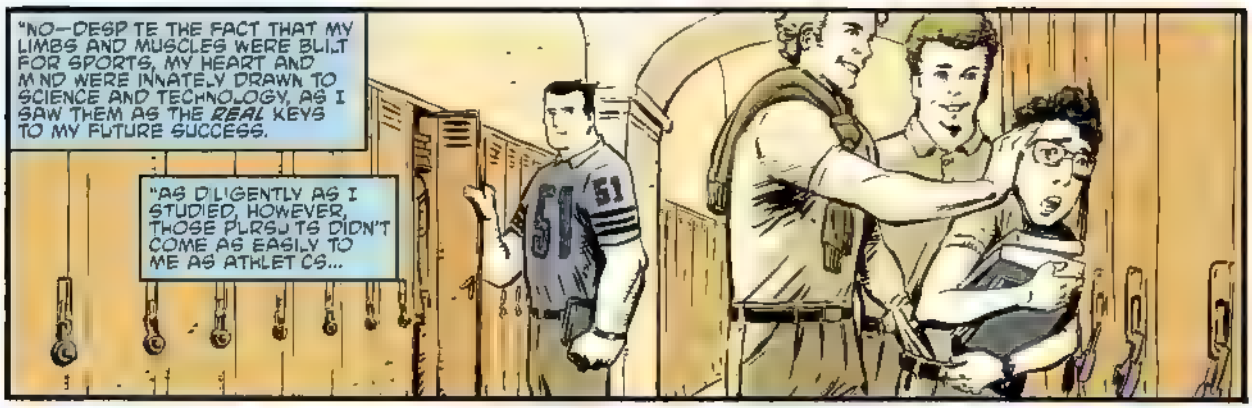

I MISS YOU GUYS, TOO.

HEY, HAROLD, IT'S DONNIE. I'VE BEEN TRYING TO GET A HOLD OF YOU ALL DAY.
LET ME IN, WILLYA?
GEEZ—IT'S BAD ENOUGH YOU SCREEN THE FEW PHONE CALLS YOU GET, BUT YOUR SECURITY CAMERA, TOO?
NOW LET'S SEE IF I REMEMBER THIS DARN CODE...
beep boop beep
SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOUR PRECIOUS HERMIT TIME, BUT I WAS HOPING TO FIND OUT IF YOU'VE HEARD ANYTHING NEW ABOUT PROFESSOR HONEYCUTT.
WHA—?

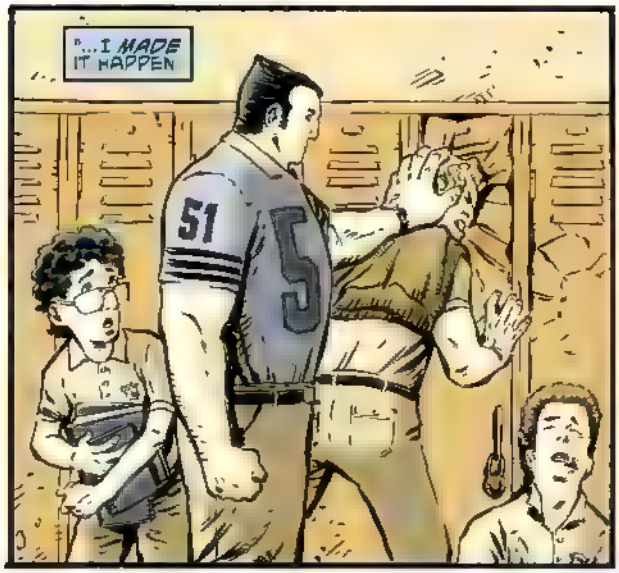

NOT HERE.
WHAT THE HECK'S GO NG ON?
SECURITY FEED
KTHAT
GYAH!
OH, NO...


"...THEY TOOK HIM."
TO START, PLEASE ALLOW ME TO THANK YOU FOR TAKING THIS MEETING...
...INVENTOR.
WELL, IT'S NOT LIKE I HAD MUCH OF A CHOICE IN THE MATTER—
—NOT WITH THESE DIMWITTED NEANDERTHALS DRAGGING ME IN HERE BY FORCE.
AND, FOR THE THOUSANDTH TIME, MY NAME IS DOCTOR LIBBY MEITNER... NOT "THE INVENTOR."
MY APOLOGIES, DR. MEITNER, BUT YOU MUST UNDERSTAND, USING ONE'S REAL NAME IN THIS BUSINESS RISKS UNWANTED EXPOSURE. THAT SAID, THIS BUILDING IS SECURE, SO WE CAN FOREGO SUCH PRECAUTIONS HERE.
MULTIPLE PH.D'S AND A GENIUS I.Q. ALL FOR A STUPID NICKNAME? I DON'T THINK SO.
PLEASE LEAVE US ALONE, MR. JAMMER... MR. TURK.
SPEAKING OF STUPID NICKNAMES.
YOU HEARD THE MAN, TURK. LET'S ROLL.
YO.
I SEE MY CLOAKS ARE STILL WORKING AS ADVERTISED. PLUG AND PLAY.
SO SIMPLE, EVEN THOSE DULLARDS CAN OPERATE THEM.
YES... AND NO.
PLEASE TAKE A SEAT, DOCTOR. WE HAVE MUCH TO DISCUSS.

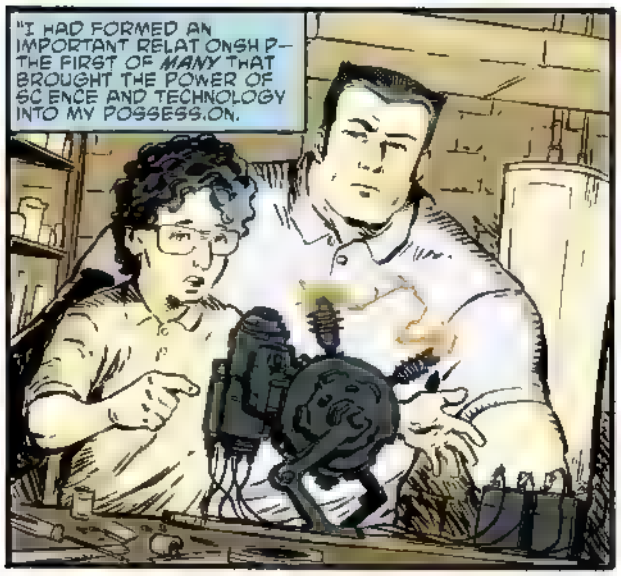
CAN I TELL YOU A STORY?
I DON'T KNOW—CAN YOU?
IT WAS A RHETOR CAL QUESTION, DR. MEITNER.
AND YET MY ANSWER WASN'T.
YES, WELL...
SCIENCE FAIR
FIRST PRIZE
HARLOW COUNTRY DAY HIGH SCHOOL
...THIS WON'T TAKE LONG.
DARIUS DUN
FIRST TEAM ALL COUNTY
FOOTBALL LINEBACKER
HARLOW COUNTRY DAY HIGH SCHOOL
WHEN I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL, I WAS A STAR ATHLETE—
"—BUILT AS I WAS, I WAS QUITE THE TERROR ON THE GRIDIRON AND COULD HAVE EASILY CONTINUED ON INTO THE COLLEGE AND PROFESSIONAL RANKS HAD I DESIRED TO DO SO.
HOME
VISITOR
DOWN
TO GO
QTR
"BUT THAT WAS NEVER MY TRUE CALLING"
51


"NO—DESP TE THE FACT THAT MY LIMBS AND MUSCLES WERE BUILT FOR SPORTS, MY HEART AND M ND WERE INNATELY DRAWN TO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, AS I SAW THEM AS THE *REAL* KEYS TO MY FUTURE SUCCESS.
"AS D'LIGENTLY AS I STUDIED, HOWEVER, THOSE PURSU TS DIDN'T COME AS EASILY TO ME AS ATHLET CS...

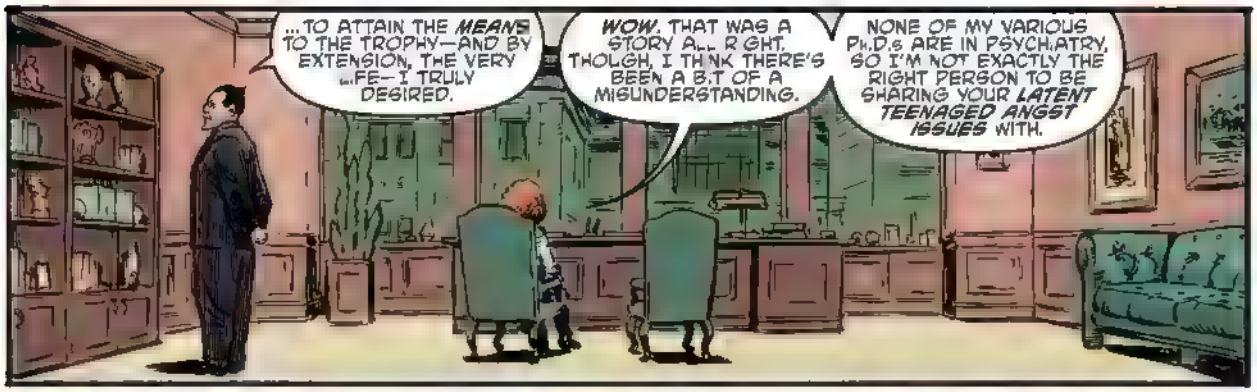
".. AND I KNEW I'D NEED TO F ND *ANOTHER WAY* TO INCORPORATE THEM NTO MY LIFE.
"SO WHEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO JUST THAT PRESENTED .TSELF TO ME ONE DAY, US.NG MY UNIQUE PHYS CAL ATTR BUTES...

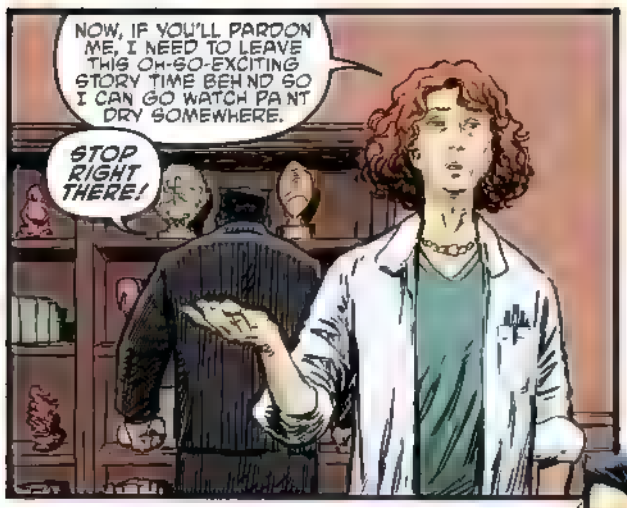

"...I *MADE* IT HAPPEN

"AND THOUGH MY NTERVENTION CAUSED ME A THREE-DAY SUSPENS ON FROM SCHOOL, IT SERVED AS MY OWN PERSONA. *TURNING POINT* .N L FE.


"I HAD FORMED AN IMPORTANT RELAT ONSH P— THE FIRST OF *MANY* THAT BROUGHT THE POWER OF SC ENCE AND TECHNOLOGY INTO MY POSSESS.ON.

SCIENCE FAIR
"I HAD USED THE *BODY* I WAS GIVEN..."


...TO ATTAIN THE MEANS TO THE TROPHY—AND BY EXTENSION, THE VERY ..FE—I TRULY DESIRED.
WOW. THAT WAS A STORY A.. R GHT. THOUGH, I TH NK THERE'S BEEN A B.T OF A MISUNDERSTANDING.
NONE OF MY VARIOUS Ph.D.s ARE IN PSYCH.ATRY, SO I'M NOT EXACTLY THE RIGHT PERSON TO BE SHARING YOUR LATENT TEENAGED ANGST ISSUES WITH.


NOW, IF YOU'LL PARDON ME, I NEED TO LEAVE THIS OH-SO-EXCITING STORY TIME BEH ND SO I CAN GO WATCH PA NT DRY SOMEWHERE.
STOP RIGHT THERE!

THE ONLY MISUNDERSTANDING HERE 'S YOUR INAB LITY TO COMPREHEND WHAT I'VE BEEN EXPLAINING TO YOU!
S MPLY PUT, WHEN I WANT SOMETHING, I F.ND THE MEANS TO MAKE T HAPPEN, AND MOST RECENTLY, YOU HAVE BEEN THOSE MEANS... NVENTOR.

I WON'T DENY YOUR EFFORTS WERE SUFFIC ENT FOR A TIME, BJT OUR ENEM ES ARE QUICKLY DEVELOP NG COUNTERMEASJRES THAT MUST BE MET IN K ND.

WEL.. THE LOCALIZED EMP WASN'T EXACTLY CHOPPED LIVER.*
A GOOD START, YES— BJT NOT ENOUGH.
HOK
I WANT MORE.
I WANT THIS CITY.

AS I STATED, THOSE BLASTED MUTANTS AND NINJAS FOUND A WAY TO GO BEYOND SWORDS AND STICKS IN ORDER TO MATCH US AND I COULD NOT *ALLOW* THAT TO STAND.
I KNEW I NEEDED TO *FIX* OUR DWINDLING STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE, SO I *MADE* IT HAPPEN.
MY GOD...
...*HAROLD.*
YES. YOUR FORMER PARTNER AND OUR ENEMY'S SECRET WEAPON. BUT NOT FOR LONG.
HE WILL AWAKEN SOON, AND WHEN HE DOES, YOU WILL HELP ME CONVINCE HIM TO *RENEW* YOUR PARTNERSHIP AND JOIN US.
AND DO NOT EVEN *THINK* ABOUT DEFYING ME IN THIS MATTER WITH YOUR INCESSANT INSOLENCE.
IF YOU LEARNED *ANYTHING* FROM MY STORY, DOCTOR, I HOPE IT'S THAT I DO NOT ABIDE THOSE WHO STAND IN THE WAY OF WHAT I WANT.
I ASSUME THERE ARE NO MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT THAT.
NO. NO MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

FATHER, THEY TOOK HAROLD!
WHOA, DON, SLOW DOWN. WHAT'S GO.NG ON?
IT'S HAROLD, LEO—THE STREET PHANTOMS KIDNAPPED HIM FROM HIS LAB.
YOU'RE CERTAIN OF TH S, MY SON?
YES. I SAW T ON HAROLD'S SECJR TY FEED. IT WAS JAMMER AND THOSE CREEPS. THEY TASED HIM THEN TOOK HIM SOMEWHERE.
HM. EARLIER THAN I HAD EXPECTED.
EXPECTED?
YOU... KNEW THIS WAS GONNA HAPPEN, FATHER?
I PLANNED FOR T TO HAPPEN. TO BE PRECISE. I HAD JENNIKA PROVIDE ANONYMOLS INFORMATION REGARDING HAROLD LILJA TO THE STREET PHANTOMS.
I KNEW THEY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RESIST REMOVING HIM FROM US ONCE THEY KNEW H S WHEREABOUTS.
YOU... YOU DELIBERATELY PUT HAROLD IN DANGER?
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME ABOUT THIS, JENNY?
I—
SHE DID NOT TELL YOU BECAJSE I TOLD HER SHE COULD NOT. SHE FOLLOWED ORDERS, AS .S HER SWORN DUTY TO DO.
AS IS YOURS, CHUNIN.

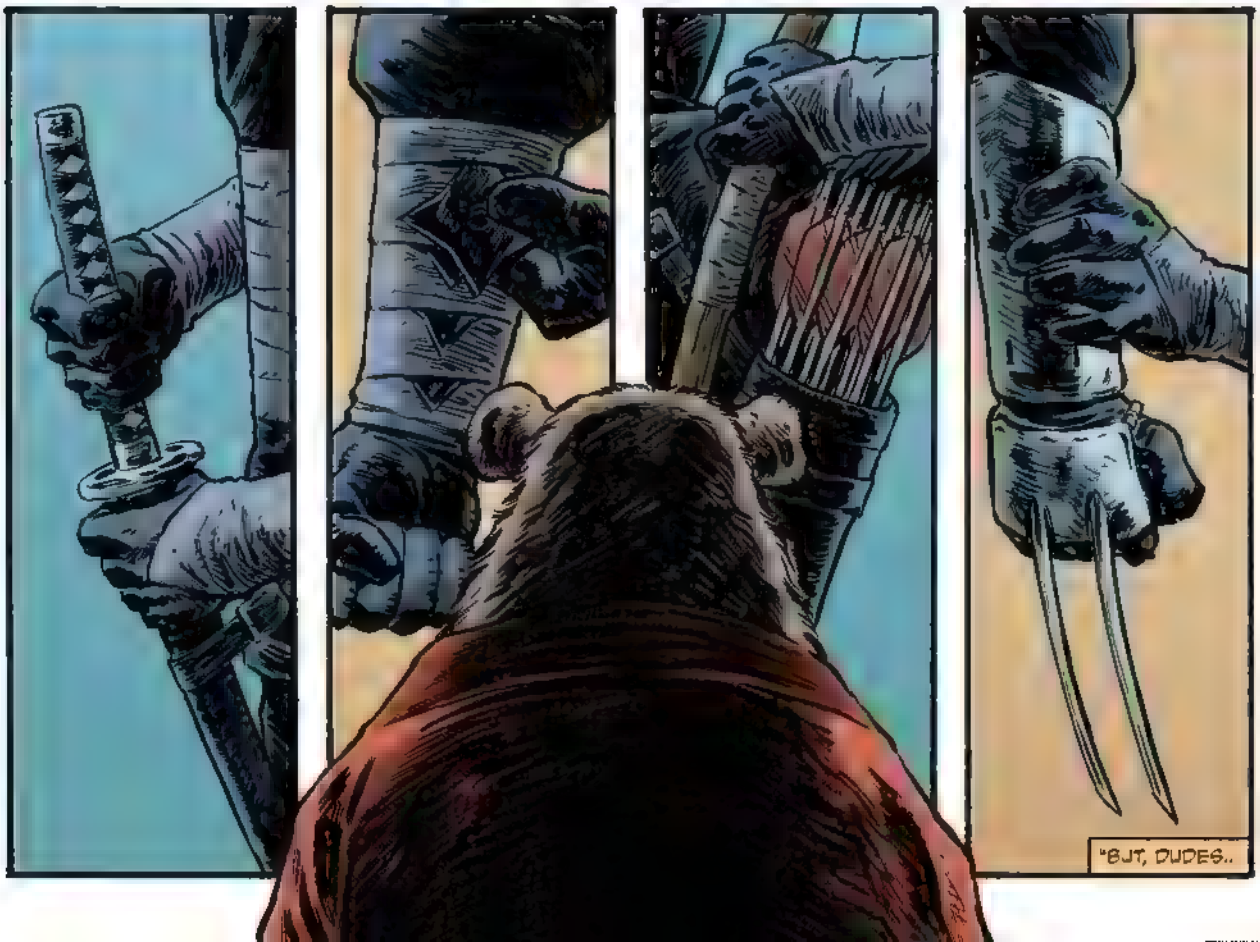
I UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERNS, DONATELLO, BUT ALTHOUGH THEIR METHODS OF RETRIEVAL MAY HAVE CAUSED HIM SOME DISCOMFORT, YOUR FRIEND IS IN NO MORTAL DANGER.
I AM CONFIDENT OUR ENEMY UNDERSTANDS, JUST AS WE DO, HOW VALUABLE AN ASSET HAROLD LIJAS IN THIS WAR.
"ASSET?"
AND NOW, WHILE THEIR ATTENTIONS ARE FOCUSED ON THEIR NEWEST TROPHY, THE FOOT CLAN WILL STRIKE.
TONIGHT...
...WE DESTROY THE STREET PHANTOMS.

KEVIN EASTMAN
TOMM HAGEN

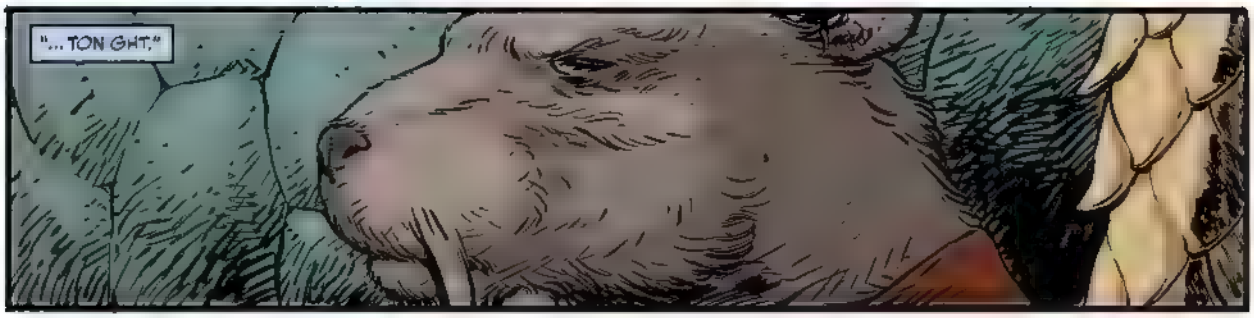
ISSUE #63

"SO, THE FOOT CLAN'S GO'N' TO WAR, HUH?

"WELL, HATE TO BE THE JERK TO SAY I TOLD YOU SO.


"BUT, DUDES..

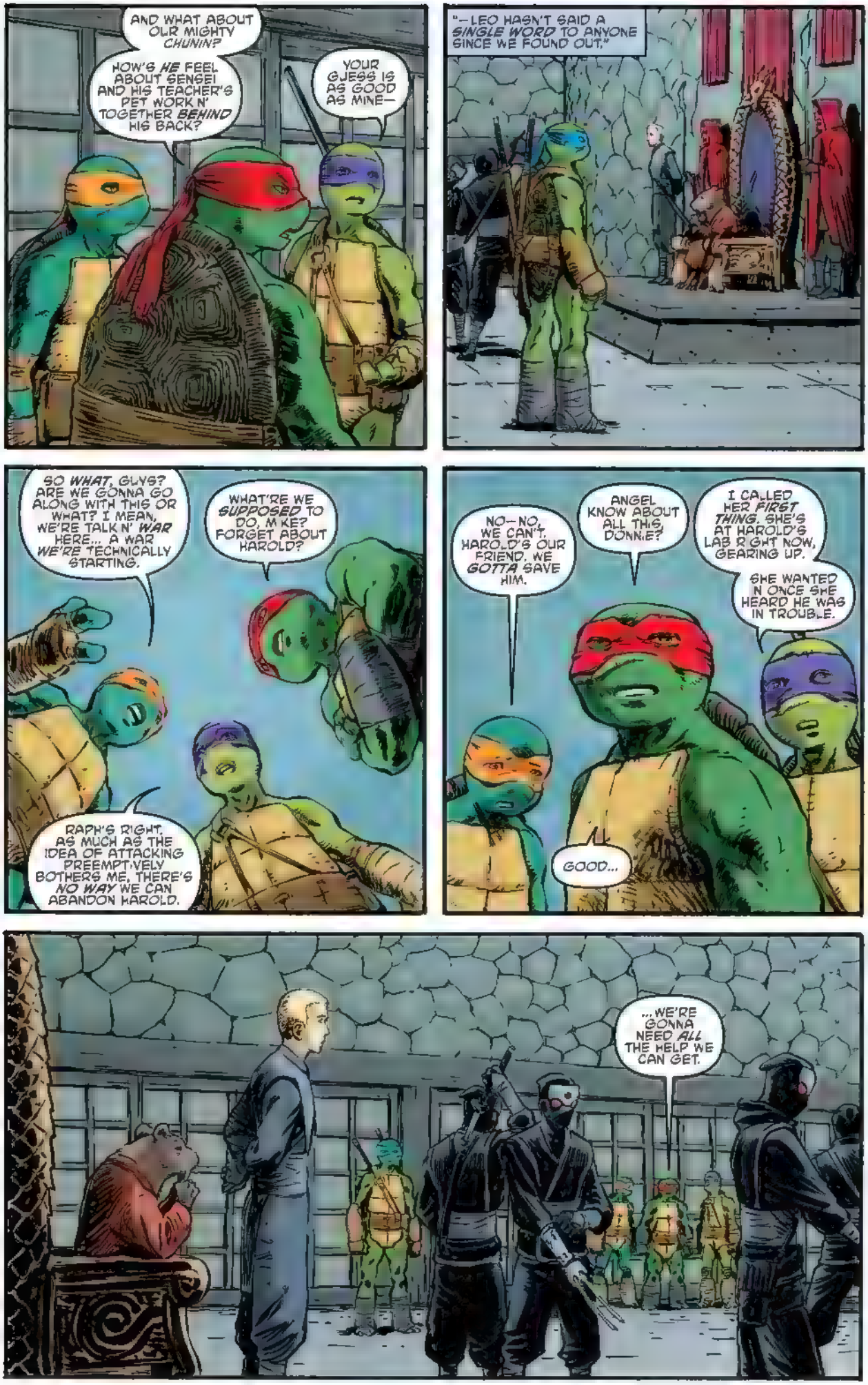
...I TOTALLY TOLD YOU SO.
CHILL, MIKE. WE JUST FREAKIN' GOT HERE—WE DON'T KNOW IF THAT'S WHAT'S GOIN' ON.
OH, WE KNOW. ALL R GHT, RAPH. FATHER'S BENT ON WIPING OUT THE STREET PHANTOMS...

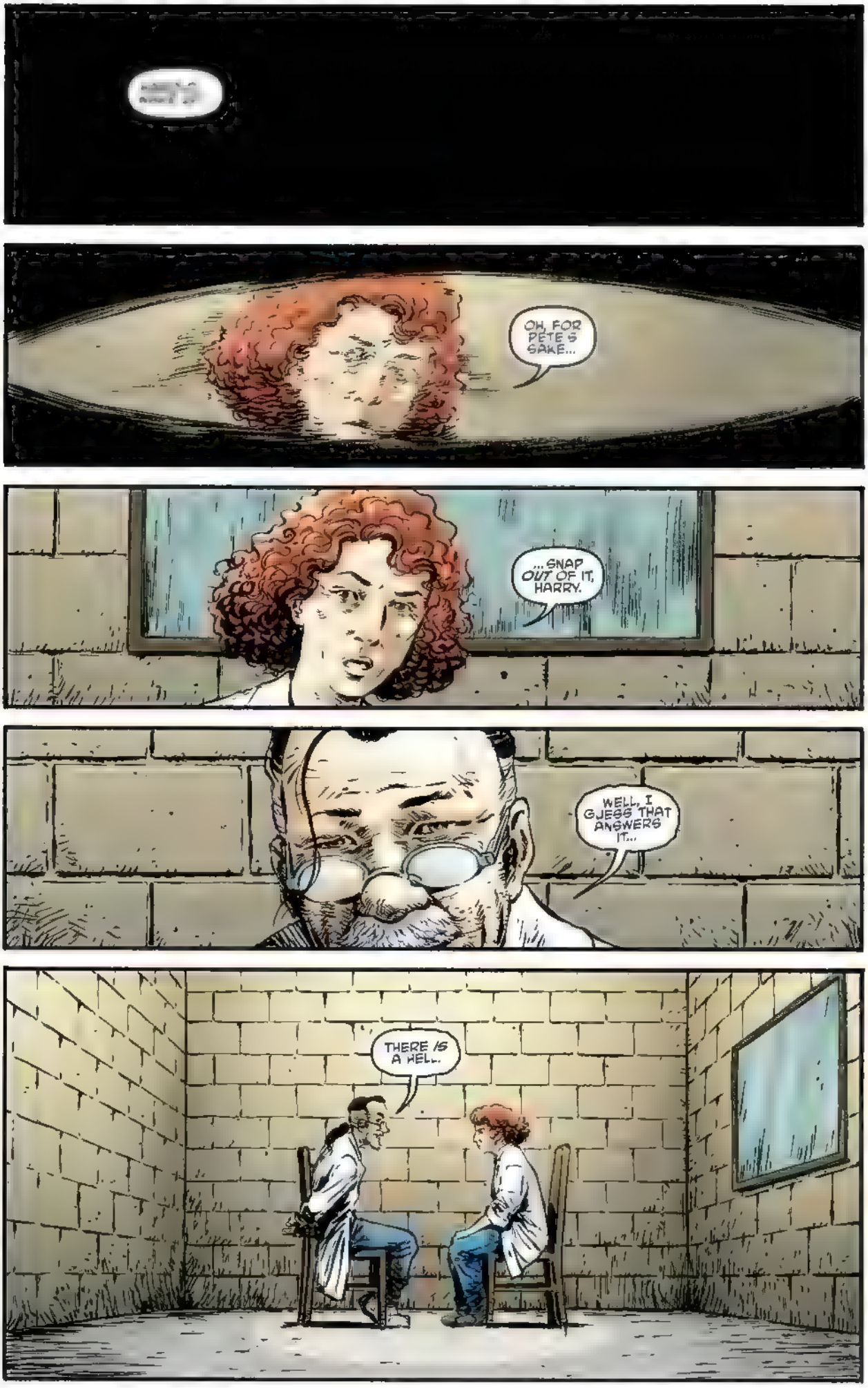

"... TON GHT."

BUT THERE'S MORE. THE PHANTOMS K.DNAPPED HAROLD... AND FATHER LET THEM.
THEY TOOK HAROLD?
WAIT—WHAT D'YOU MEAN FATHER LET THEM, DON?

FATHER HAD JENN KA ANONYMOJSLY FEED THE PHANTOMS THE .OCATION OF HAROLD'S LAB, F GJR NG THEY COULDN'T RESIST GOING AFTER HIM ONCE THEY KNEW WHERE TO FIND HIM.
BUT... WHY?
FATHER WANTS TO STRIKE NOW WHILE THEY'RE FOCJSED ON THE "STRATEGIC ASSET" THEY'VE STOLEN FROM US.
A DIVERS ON.

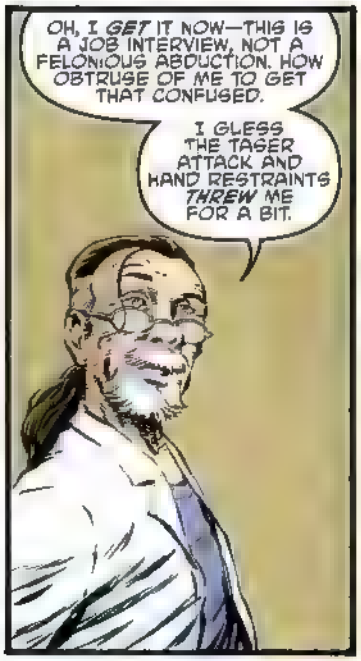
HE ACTJALLY CALLED HAROLD AN "ASSET." CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?


AND WHAT ABOUT OUR MIGHTY CHUNIN?
HOW'S HE FEEL ABOUT SENSEI AND HIS TEACHER'S PET WORK N' TOGETHER BEHIND HIS BACK?
YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS MINE—
"—LEO HASN'T SAID A SINGLE WORD TO ANYONE SINCE WE FOUND OUT."
SO WHAT, GUYS? ARE WE GONNA GO ALONG WITH THIS OR WHAT? I MEAN, WE'RE TALK N' WAR HERE... A WAR WE'RE TECHNICALLY STARTING.
WHAT'RE WE SUPPOSED TO DO, MIKE? FORGET ABOUT HAROLD?
RAPH'S RIGHT. AS MUCH AS THE IDEA OF ATTACKING PREEMPTIVELY BOTHERS ME, THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN ABANDON HAROLD.
NO—NO, WE CAN'T. HAROLD'S OUR FRIEND. WE GOTTA SAVE HIM.
ANGEL KNOW ABOUT ALL THIS, DONNIE?
I CALLED HER FIRST THING. SHE'S AT HAROLD'S LAB RIGHT NOW, GEARING UP.
SHE WANTED IN ONCE SHE HEARD HE WAS IN TROUBLE.
GOOD...
...WE'RE GONNA NEED ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET.


OH, FOR PETE'S SAKE...
...SNAP OUT OF IT, HARRY.
WELL, I GUESS THAT ANSWERS IT...
THERE IS A HELL.

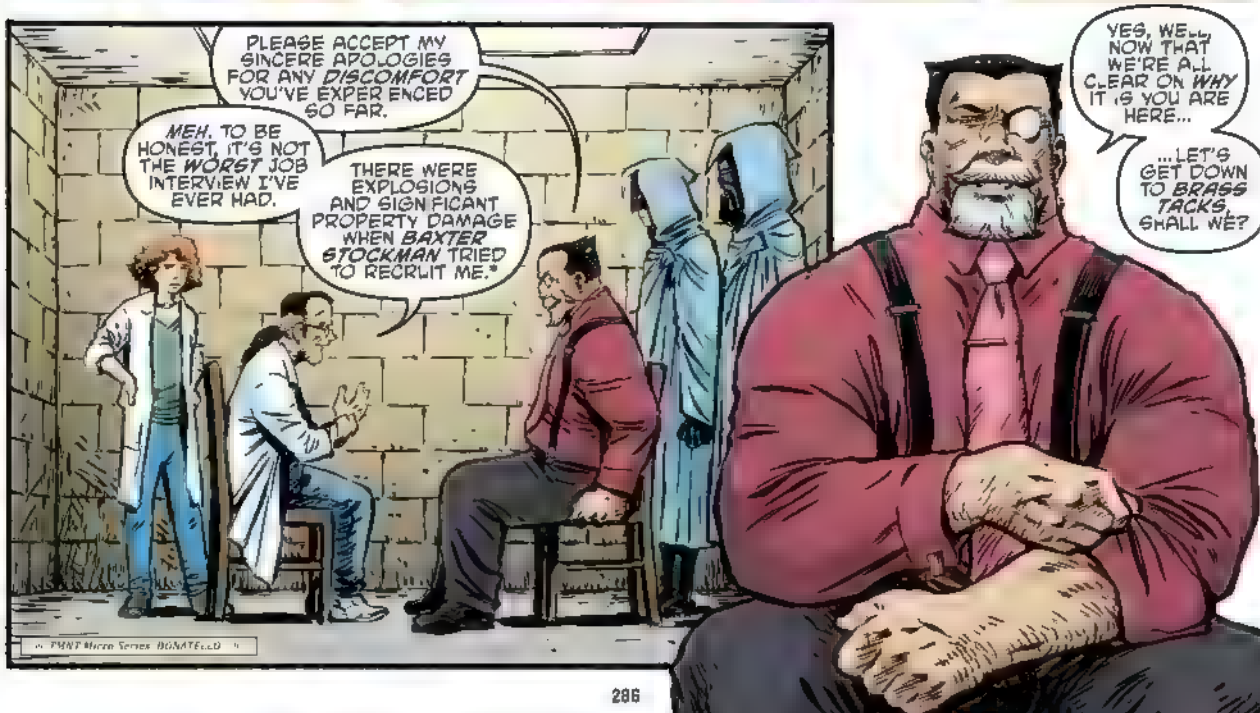
GIVE IT A REST, HARRY. YOU KNOW *FULL WELL* YOU'RE NOT DEAD.
YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT.
LET'S SEE... MY HANDS ARE *LASHED* TO A CHAIR, I HAVE THE WORLD'S *WORST* MIGRAINE, AND I'M OBVIOUSLY BEING *MONITORED* THROUGH A POORLY DISGUISED TWO-WAY MIRROR.
CLUB MED, MAYBE?
NO, WAIT— *YOU'RE* STILL HERE.
DEFINITELY HELL.
SAME OLD SARDONIC JACKASS AS EVER, I SEE.
DO YOU EVEN *REALIZE* THE TROUBLE YOU'RE IN?
I'M THINKING THAT'S A BETTER QUESTION FOR *YOU*, LIBBY. KIDNAPPING? REALLY?
TELL ME—WAS THE MONEY GRAB *WORTH* IT?
OH, FOR CRYING OUT LOUD, *LISTEN* TO YOU! THIS HAS GONE *FAR BEYOND* GETTING RICH AND *YOU* KNOW IT.
YOU'VE SEEN MY EQUIPMENT IN ACTION—YOU KNOW HOW ADVANCED MY DESIGNS HAVE BECOME SINCE WE SPLIT.
SINCE YOU *LEFT*.
WHATEVER BICKERING OVER SEMANTICS IS *POINTLESS*. THE PAST IS THE PAST.
BUT THE *FUTURE*?
I KNOW WHAT YOU'VE BEEN UP TO IN YOUR LAB, HARRY... WHAT YOU'VE *ACCOMPLISHED* ON A SHOESTRING BUDGET DURING THE YEARS WE'VE BEEN APART.
JUST IMAGINE THE AMAZING THINGS WE COULD DO NOW, TOGETHER, WITH THE AMPLE RESOURCES I HAVE AVAILABLE TO ME—RESOURCES THAT COULD EASILY BE *YOURS*, TOO.
SHE'S *RIGHT*, MR. LILJA...

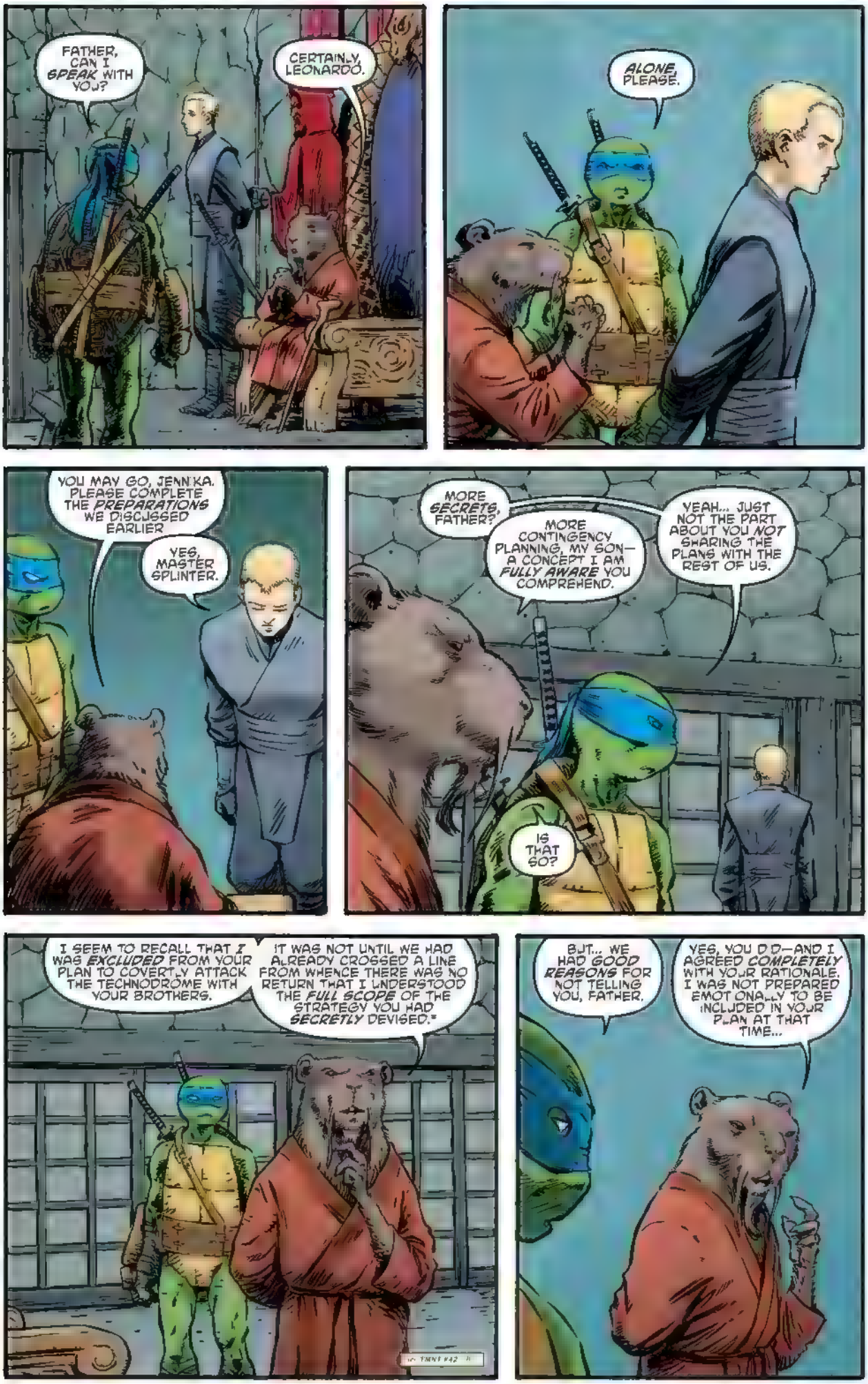
...WE'D LOVE NOTHING MORE THAN TO HAVE YOU JOIN OUR TEAM.


OH, I GET IT NOW—THIS IS A JOB INTERVIEW, NOT A FELONIOUS ABDUCTION. HOW OBTRUSE OF ME TO GET THAT CONFUSED.
I GUESS THE TASER ATTACK AND HAND RESTRAINTS THREW ME FOR A BIT.

BOTH UNFORTUNATE PRECAUTIONS, I'M AFRAID. NOTHING PERSONAL.
MAZE, PLEASE FREE MR. LILJA'S HANDS.
YOU GOT IT, BOSS.

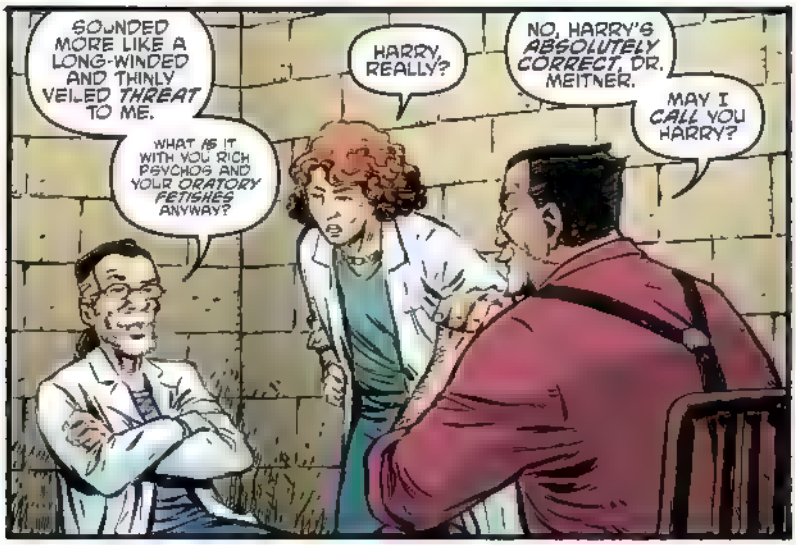
SHIIPP

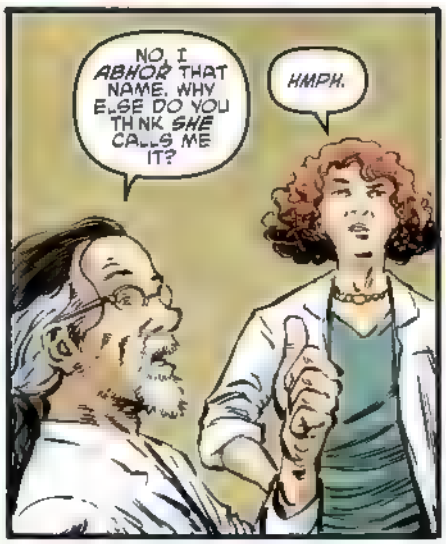

PLEASE ACCEPT MY SINCERE APOLOGIES FOR ANY DISCOMFORT YOU'VE EXPERIENCED SO FAR.
MEH. TO BE HONEST, IT'S NOT THE WORST JOB INTERVIEW I'VE EVER HAD.
THERE WERE EXPLOSIONS AND SIGNIFICANT PROPERTY DAMAGE WHEN BAXTER STOCKMAN TRIED TO RECRUIT ME.
YES, WELL, NOW THAT WE'RE ALL CLEAR ON WHY IT IS YOU ARE HERE...
...LET'S GET DOWN TO BRASS TACKS, SHALL WE?
TMNT Micro Series DONATELLO

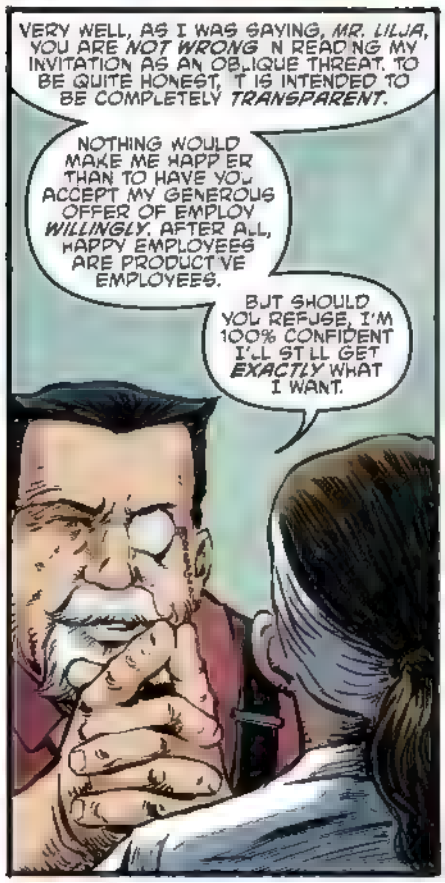

FATHER, CAN I SPEAK WITH YOU?
CERTAINLY, LEONARDO.
ALONE, PLEASE.
YOU MAY GO, JENNIKA. PLEASE COMPLETE THE PREPARATIONS WE DISCUSSED EARLIER
YES, MASTER SPLINTER.
MORE SECRETS, FATHER?
MORE CONTINGENCY PLANNING, MY SON— A CONCEPT I AM FULLY AWARE YOU COMPREHEND.
YEAH... JUST NOT THE PART ABOUT YOU NOT SHARING THE PLANS WITH THE REST OF US.
IS THAT SO?
I SEEM TO RECALL THAT I WAS EXCLUDED FROM YOUR PLAN TO COVERTLY ATTACK THE TECHNODROME WITH YOUR BROTHERS.
IT WAS NOT UNTIL WE HAD ALREADY CROSSED A LINE FROM WHENCE THERE WAS NO RETURN THAT I UNDERSTOOD THE FULL SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY YOU HAD SECRETLY DEVISED.
BUT... WE HAD GOOD REASONS FOR NOT TELLING YOU, FATHER.
YES, YOU DID—AND I AGREED COMPLETELY WITH YOUR RATIONALE. I WAS NOT PREPARED EMOTIONALLY TO BE INCLUDED IN YOUR PLAN AT THAT TIME...

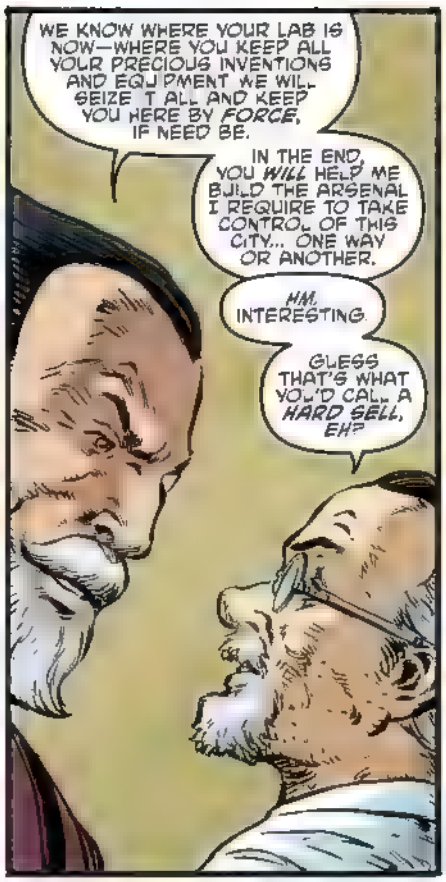
...JUST AS I BELIEVE YOU ARE NOT YET READY TO KNOW ALL THAT I HAVE IN STORE FOR OUR ENEMIES, OR OUR CLAN
BUT... OUR FAMILY...
REMAINS MY HIGHEST PRIORITY, MY SON.
BUT AS MASTER OF THE FOOT CLAN, I FIND THAT RESPONSIBILITY HAS EXPANDED BEYOND YOUR BROTHERS AND MYSELF.
THE CLAN—NO MATTER HOW BIG, NO MATTER HOW SMALL—IS MY FAMILY NOW. AND AS HEAD OF THE FAMILY, I AM FORCED AT TIMES TO MAKE DIFFICULT DECISIONS THAT ARE NOT WELL LIKED BY ALL.
IT IS ONE OF THE MANY BURDENS OF LEADERSHIP, AS YOU WELL KNOW.
WHEN YOU HID YOUR PLANS REGARDING THE TECHNODROME FROM ME, YOU DID SO WITH THE RIGHT INTENTIONS, AS DIFFICULT AS IT WAS TO DO SO.
I ONLY ASK THAT YOU GRANT ME THE SAME FAITH NOW, LEONARDO
TRUST THAT WHAT I DO—NO MATTER HOW CONFUSING—IS ULTIMATELY FOR A NOBLE CAUSE.
I... I TRUST YOU, FATHER
GOOD.
NOW, FINISH YOUR PREPARATIONS. WE DISEMBARK SOON. I WISH TO CONDUCT A THOROUGH RECONNAISSANCE BEFORE WE STRIKE OUR ENEMY.
SO WHAT'S THE WORD, BRO?
YEAH, LEO—WHAT'D HE SAY?
HE SAID TO GET READY...

"...WE'RE GOING TO WAR."
SO THAT'S IT, MR. LILJA— MY SINCERE INVITATION TO JOIN OUR SIDE.
TO BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE ORGANIZATION THAT WILL SOON RUN THIS CITY.
INVITATION, HUH?


SOUNDED MORE LIKE A LONG-WINDED AND THINLY VEILED THREAT TO ME.
WHAT IS IT WITH YOU RICH PSYCHOS AND YOUR ORATORY FETISHES ANYWAY?
HARRY, REALLY?
NO, HARRY'S ABSOLUTELY CORRECT, DR. MEITNER.
MAY I CALL YOU HARRY?


NO, I ABHOR THAT NAME. WHY ELSE DO YOU THINK SHE CALLS ME IT?
HMPH.


VERY WELL, AS I WAS SAYING, MR. LILJA, YOU ARE NOT WRONG IN READING MY INVITATION AS AN OBLIQUE THREAT. TO BE QUITE HONEST, IT IS INTENDED TO BE COMPLETELY TRANSPARENT.
NOTHING WOULD MAKE ME HAPPIER THAN TO HAVE YOU ACCEPT MY GENEROUS OFFER OF EMPLOY WILLINGLY. AFTER ALL, HAPPY EMPLOYEES ARE PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYEES.
BUT SHOULD YOU REFUSE, I'M 100% CONFIDENT I'LL STILL GET EXACTLY WHAT I WANT.

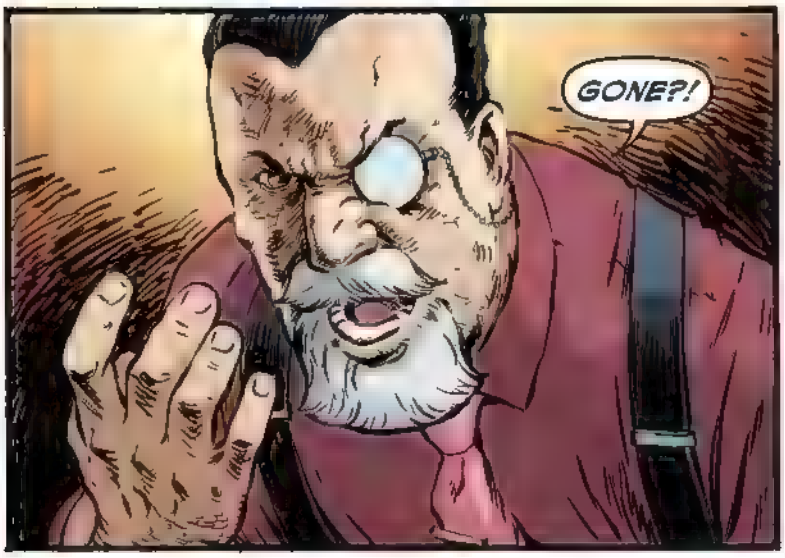

WE KNOW WHERE YOUR LAB IS NOW—WHERE YOU KEEP ALL YOUR PRECIOUS INVENTIONS AND EQUIPMENT. WE WILL SEIZE IT ALL AND KEEP YOU HERE BY FORCE, IF NEED BE.
IN THE END, YOU WILL HELP ME BUILD THE ARSENAL I REQUIRE TO TAKE CONTROL OF THIS CITY... ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.
HM. INTERESTING.
GUESS THAT'S WHAT YOU'D CALL A HARD SELL, EH?

CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL, BUT I'M CERTAIN YOUR FORMER PARTNER WILL TESTIFY TO THE MATERIAL ADVANTAGES THAT COME WITH FULL COMPLIANCE, IN BOTH MONEY AND RESOURCES.
IS THAT NOT TRUE, DR. MEITNER?
I CAN'T COMPLAIN IN THAT REGARD, NO.

WELL, UNLIKE MY GREEDY FORMER COHORT HERE, I CAN COMPLAIN PLENTY.
OH, LORD, HERE WE GO.
ONE, MY "PRECIOUS INVENTIONS" BELONG TO ME AND ONLY ME—AS DOES MY MIND.
LIBBY MIGHT BE FOR SALE TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER, BUT I'M NOT.
NEVER HAVE BEEN, NEVER WILL BE, AND NO AMOUNT OF JUVENILE INTIMIDATION WILL CHANGE THAT FACT.
TWO, YOU'RE WASTING EVERYONE'S TIME—MAINLY MINE—WITH YOUR THREATS OF VIOLENCE. I'M NOT ONE FOR ASSOCIATING WITH OTHER PEOPLE—
—BUT CONTRARY TO DOCTOR BACKSTAB HERE, THE FEW FRIENDS I DO HAVE ARE LOYAL TO A FAULT AND PRETTY DAMNED ADEPT AT VIOLENCE THEMSELVES WHEN PROPERLY MOTIVATED.
TRUST ME, HE'S NOT.
IF IT COMES TO THAT, YOUR CLOAKED LACKEYS WON'T STAND A CHANCE.
WHAT'D THAT OLD GOAT CALL US?
WHICH BRINGS US TO, THREE—
—I'M DONE WITH THIS INANE CONVERSATION
LOOK OUT!
BEEP BEEP

MY EYES!

I CAN'T SEE! I CAN'T SEE!
ME NEITHER!
WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED? WHERE'S LILJA?
HE'S GONE.


GONE?!

OH, HARRY..

"...YOU WILY, PARANOID GENIUS, YOU."
OH, GOD, I'M BLIND!
MY EYES!
BLAST YOUR EYES!
IT'S ONLY TEMPORARY, YOU IDIOTS!
GET CONTROL OF YOURSELVES AND GATHER UP THE OTHER STREET PHANTOMS!
FIND LILJA!
AND ALERT LUPO AND HIS MEN TO GET OVER HERE ASAP--

"—THAT SMUG BASTARD'S ABOUT TO FIND OUT I'VE GOT *FAR MORE* THAN 'CLOAKED LACKEYS' AT MY BEHEST."
DUN INC.
I DON'T SEE ANYBODY.
NOTHING.
OR SO IT WOULD *APPEAR*, LEONARDO.
BUT OUR ENEMY HAS ALREADY PROVEN TO BE TECHNOLOGICALLY SOPHISTICATED ON THE BATTLEFIELD.
WE MUST ASSUME THE *SAME* OF THEIR SECURITY SYSTEMS.
NOT EVEN THOSE *PHANTOM* FREAKS?
NEGATIVE. NO PHANTOMS, NO SECURITY GUARDS.
SPEAKING OF TECH, WHERE'S *ANGEL*?
HERE.
AND I BROUGHT THE *GEAR* YOU WANTED FROM HAROLD'S LAB, DONNIE.
ALL OF IT.
SHMP

EXCELLENT. THANKS, ANGEL.
OKAY, BEFORE WE DO ANYTHING ELSE, TAKE THESE, GUYS—YOU'RE GONNA *NEED* THEM TO KEEP TABS ON THE PHANTOMS IF THEY GO INVISIBLE.
AND LOCK ONE OF THESE ONTO YOUR WEAPONS.
IT'LL MATCH THE *VIBRATIONAL FREQUENCY* OF THE PHANTOMS' CLOAKS SO YOU CAN STILL HIT THEM EVEN WHEN THEY PHASE.
WHOA.
NICE.
YEAH. I'VE GOT ONE ON MY BO-STAFF AND I WORKED *GREAT* DURING ITS FIELD TEST.
WHICH REMINDS ME—*NONE* OF THIS TECH'LL DO YOU ANY GOOD IF YOU GET ZAPPED BY AN *EMP GUN*.
ANGEL AND I LEARNED THAT THE *HARD* WAY.
NO KIDDIN'.
IF YOU SEE ANY OF THE BAD GUYS DRAW ONE OUT, STAY OUT OF RANGE AND *DISABLE* IT—OR THE SHOOTER—IF YOU CAN.
BUT... BUT *NO KILLIN'*, RIGHT, GUYS?
WRONG, MUTANT...
BLAM!
P-TANG
GAHH!

THERE'S GONNA BE PLENTY OF KILLIN'.
WASTE 'EM, BOYS.
TAKE COVER!
RAPHAEL, ARE YOU—
JUST A SCRATCH.
I'M GOOD.
DONATELLO?
JUST A DENT. BULLETPROOF SHELL, REMEMBER?
IT'S GONNA BE WAY MORE THAN SCRATCHES AND DENTS IF WE DON'T GET OUR BUTTS OUTTA THIS STINKIN' ALLEY!
ANGEL'S RIGHT! WE'RE SCREWED IF WE STAY IN THIS KILL ZONE.
WHAT DO WE DO?
WE DIE...
...OR WE FIGHT!

MR. JAMMER, STATUS REPORT!
NOTHING YET, BOSS...
"...WE DON'T SEE HIM ANYWHERE."
KKKKT
GYAH! I'M BLIND AGA.N!
CHILL, JAMMER— IT'S JUST THE LIGHTS.
"SOMEBODY TURNED 'EM OFF."
IMBECILES. TH S IS ALMOST TOO...
EASY.
NOT SO FAST, HARRY...

...I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO LEAVE BEFORE I SHOWED YOU MY NEWEST INVENTION.
ZZZAPP
AAHH!
DAMMIT, WOMAN, ARE YOU TRYING TO KILL ME?!
OH, RELAX—THAT WAS JUST A WARNING SHOT AND YOU KNOW IT.
YOU'RE CRAZY, LIBBY. YOU ALWAYS WERE.
YES—ABOUT YOU, STILL AM.
AND DON'T TRY TO PRETEND YOU DON'T FEEL THE SAME WAY ABOUT ME. I SEE IT IN YOUR EYES, HARRY...
...YOU MISS BEING MY HUSBAND.
"HOW D'D WE NOT SEE THIS COMIN'?!"

I MEAN, C'MON!
BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA
SHWK
AREN'T WE SUPPOSED TO BE FIGHT'N THE DUDES N CLOAKS!
WHA—?
WHK WHK
CHK
TELL IT TO THESE GUYS, MIKE!
IT'S MY FAULT...
...I SHOULD'VE EXPECTED DUN WOULD HAVE REINFORCEMENTS!
BLAM BLAM BLAM
C'MON YOU WIMPS! FINISH THESE FREAKS ALREADY!
WAIT— DON'T WE GOT BACKUP, TOO?

GAHH!
YEAH! WHERE'S THE DAMN FOOT SOLDIERS?!
THEY'RE WAITING FOR MY ORDERS!
SHWNK
THEN ORDER THEM, MR. CHUNIN!
WH JD
THAT WILL NOT BE NECESSARY, MY SON.
KRAK
NOT NECESSARY?!
THK
THAT'S TOTALLY...
.. CRAZY
SORRY IT TOOK US SO LONG, MASTER SPLINTER...

...WE JUST NEEDED TO DO A LITTLE GEARIN' UP FIRST.

ART BY KEVIN EASTMAN
COLORS BY TOM ORZECHOWSKI

ISSUE #64

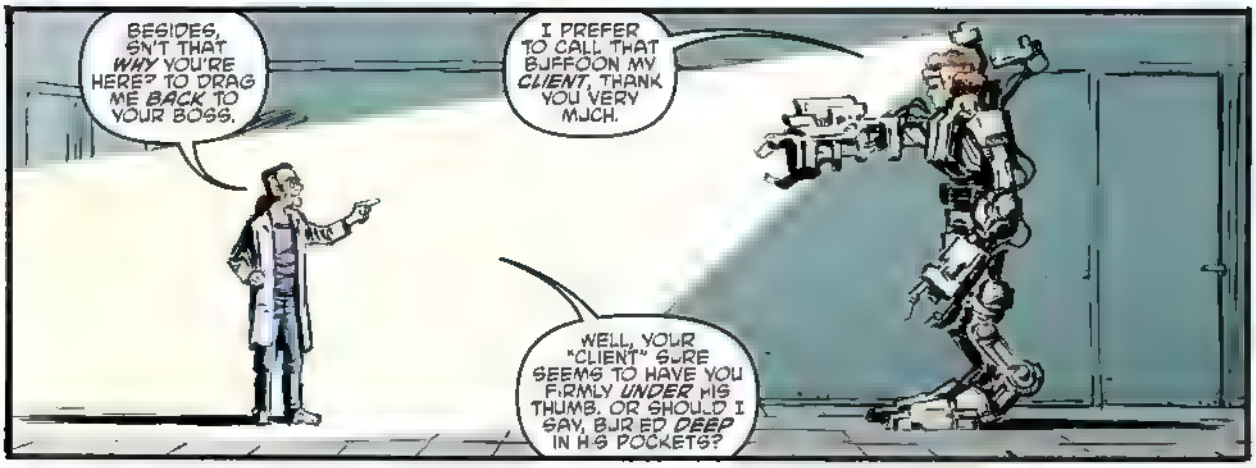
AIN'T THIS GREAT?!
KRAK
IN THE MIX AGA.N.
TOGETHER.
JUST LIKE OLD TIMES!
BLAM
CHK
I DON'T KNOW, MAN.
AAGH!
I MEAN, I M SS SCRAPPIN' WITH YOJ AND ALL...
...BUT THIS AIN'T L KE OLD T.MES.

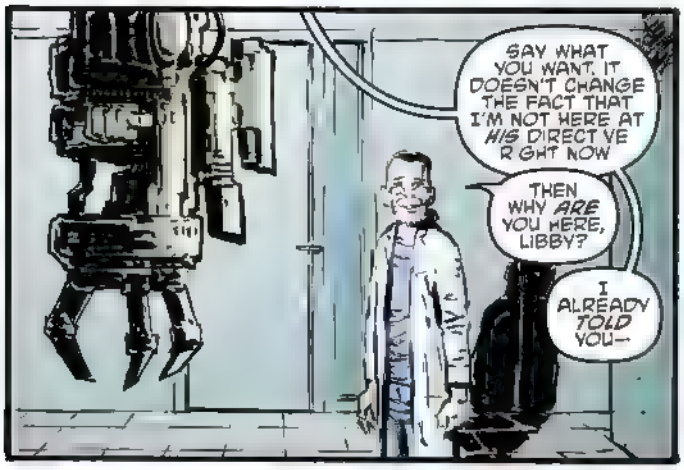
KLUNK
WHADDYA MEAN, BRO?
HE MEANS YOU HANGIN' OUT W TH THESE DRAGON DWEEBS.
SERIOUSLY, WHAT THE HELL, JONES?
I RUN THE PURPLE DRAGONS NOW.
TOOK SOME TOUGH NEGOTIAT N', BJT HERE WE ARE.
BJT WHY?
TO JOIN FORCES W TH THE FOOT CLAN—JUST L KE MASTER SPLINTER PLANNED.
YOU KNOW... TO HELP YOU GUYS RUN THE C TY AFTER WE TRASH THE PHANTOMS.
DIDN'T YOUR DAD TELL YOU?
NO.
HE DIDN'T.

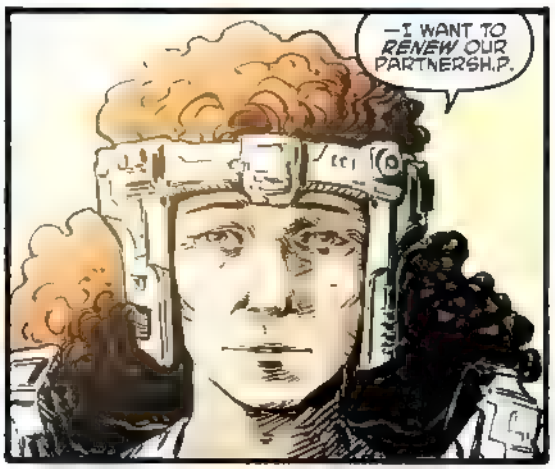
I THINK THAT'S ALL OF THEM. NICE WORK, EVERYONE.
INDEED
FATHER...
...WHAT ELSE AREN'T YOU TELLIN' US?
MY SON?
FIRST HAROLD, NOW CASEY. WHAT'S YOUR NEXT BIG SURPRISE?
RAPHAEL, I—
CAN'T IT WAIT, RAPH? HAROLD'S STILL IN TROUBLE.
DONNIE'S RIGHT. WE'VE ALREADY WASTED ENOUGH TIME FIGHTING UJPO AND HIS GOONS. WE NEED TO GET MOVING
CASEY, YOU AND THE DRAGONS STAY OUT HERE—FORM A SECURITY PERIMETER. NO TELLING IF THERE'RE MORE OF THESE WISE GUYS WAITING TO POP UP.
NO PROBLEM. AIN'T NOBODY GETTIN' PAST US.
THE REST OF US ARE GONNA HEAD INSIDE AND TAKE CARE OF THE BUSINESS WE CAME HERE FOR.
AND THIS TIME...
FOR LEASE

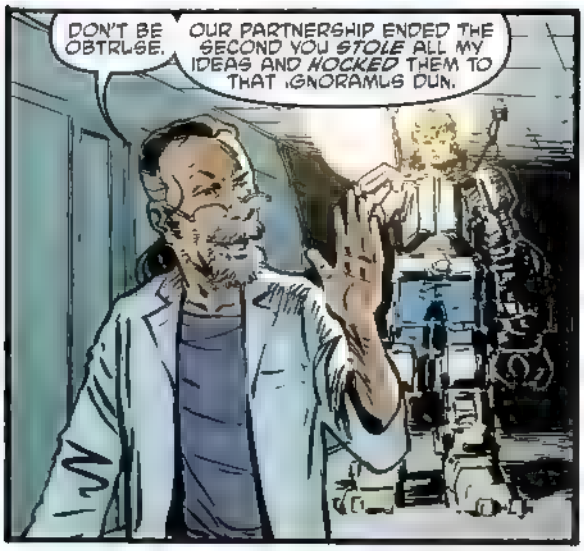
...WE GO ALL-IN.
"THEY'RE COMING FOR YOU, HAROLD..."

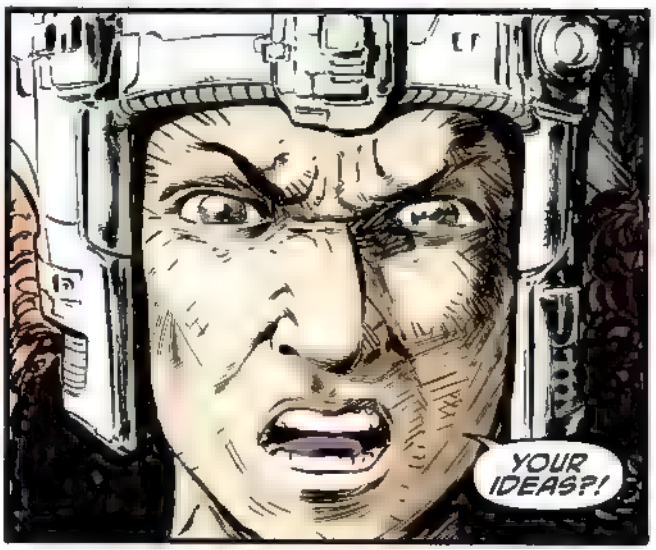
...DUN'S LITTLE LAPDOGS. THEY'RE COMBING THE BUILDING AS WE SPEAK.
THEY'RE GETTING CLOSER.
IF THEY RETURN YOU TO DUN, I'M GUESSING YOU'LL FIND THAT MONOCLED SOCIOPATH FAR LESS CORDIAL THIS TIME.
YES, BECAUSE HE WAS THE EMBODIMENT OF COURTEOUSNESS BEFORE.
MEH.

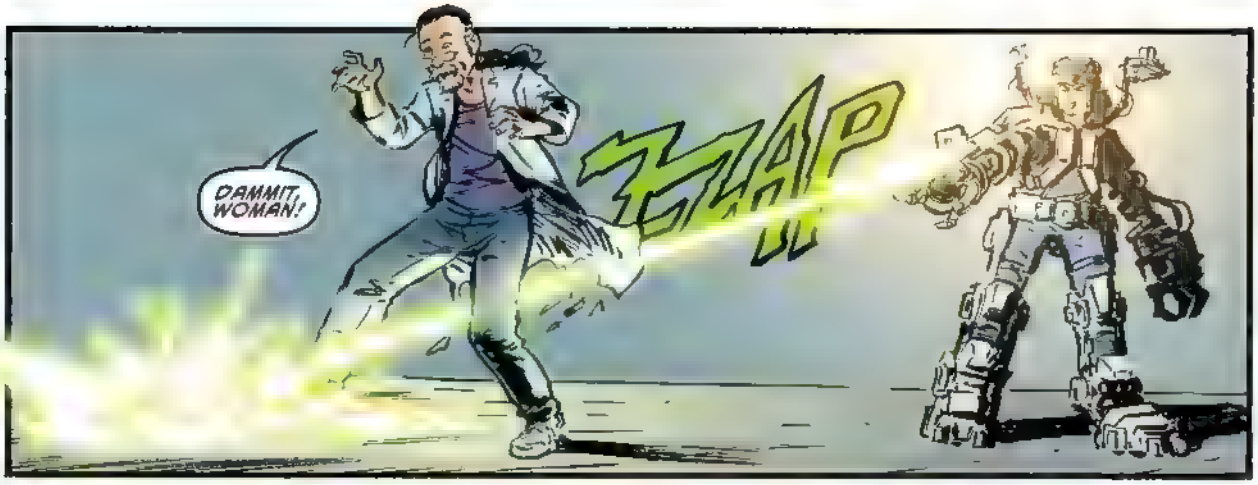

BESIDES, ISN'T THAT WHY YOU'RE HERE? TO DRAG ME BACK TO YOUR BOSS.
I PREFER TO CALL THAT BUFFOON MY CLIENT, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
WELL, YOUR "CLIENT" SURE SEEMS TO HAVE YOU FIRMLY UNDER HIS THUMB. OR SHOULD I SAY, BURIED DEEP IN HIS POCKETS?

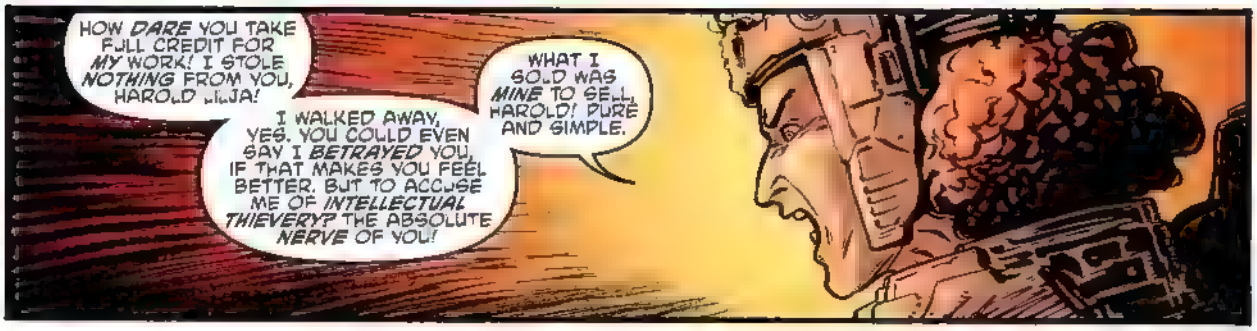

SAY WHAT YOU WANT. IT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT I'M NOT HERE AT HIS DIRECTIVE RIGHT NOW
THEN WHY ARE YOU HERE, LIBBY?
I ALREADY TOLD YOU—

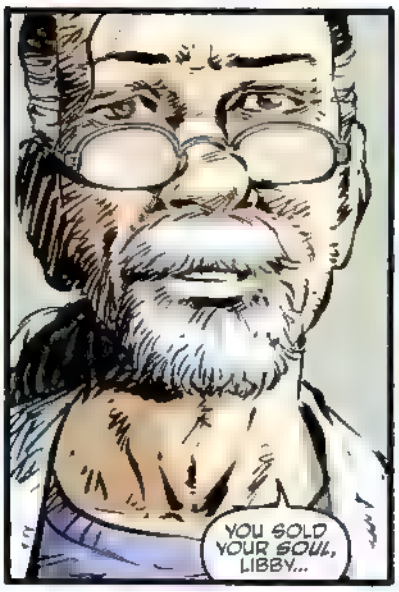

—I WANT TO RENEW OUR PARTNERSHIP.


DON'T BE OBTUSE.
OUR PARTNERSHIP ENDED THE SECOND YOU STOLE ALL MY IDEAS AND KNOCKED THEM TO THAT IGNORAMUS DUN.


YOUR IDEAS?!

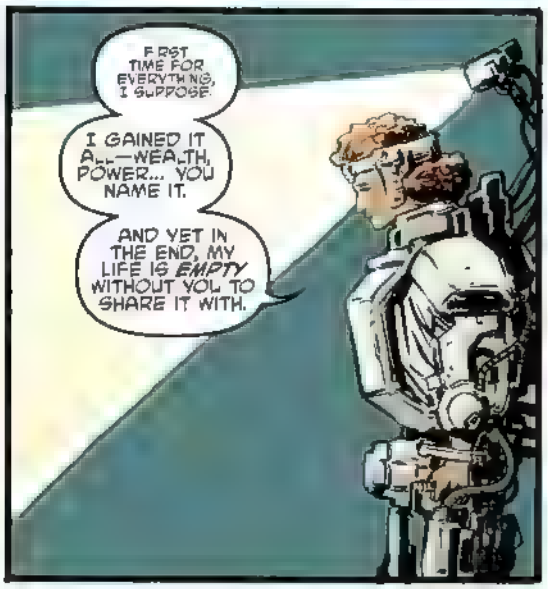

DAMMIT, WOMAN!
ZAP

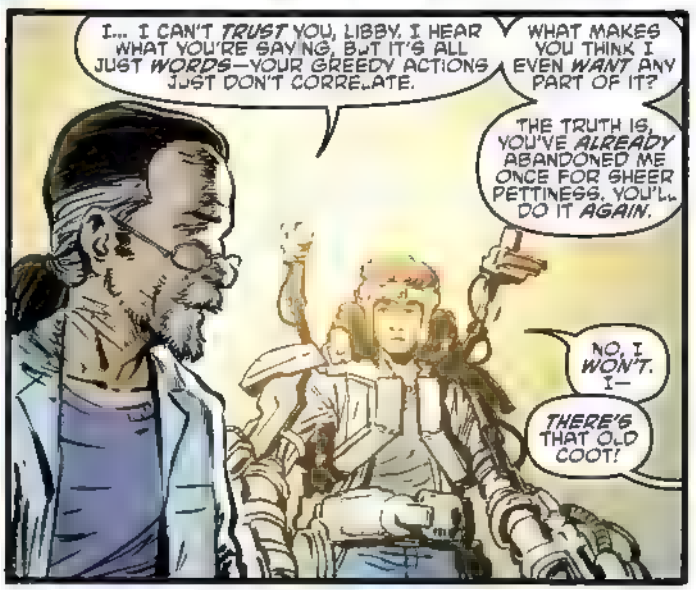

HOW DARE YOU TAKE FULL CREDIT FOR MY WORK! I STOLE NOTHING FROM YOU, HAROLD LUJA!
I WALKED AWAY, YES. YOU COULD EVEN SAY I BETRAYED YOU, IF THAT MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER. BUT TO ACCUSE ME OF INTELLECTUAL THIEVERY? THE ABSOLUTE NERVE OF YOU!
WHAT I SOLD WAS MINE TO SELL, HAROLD! PURE AND SIMPLE.


YOU SOLD YOUR SOUL, LIBBY...

...PURE AND SIMPLE.
...
YOU'RE RIGHT.

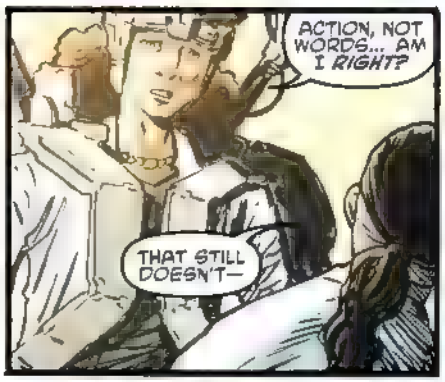
WA T WHAT?
DID YOU ACTUALLY ADMIT I WAS... RIGHT?

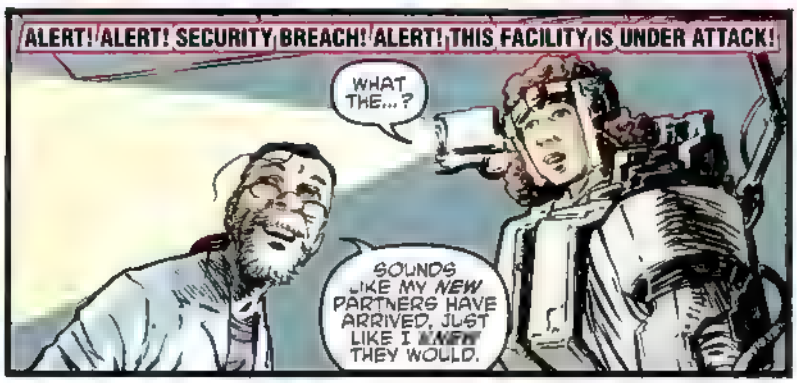

FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTH NG, I SUPPOSE.
I GAINED IT A...—WEALTH, POWER... YOU NAME IT.
AND YET IN THE END, MY LIFE IS EMPTY WITHOUT YOU TO SHARE IT WITH.


I... I CAN'T TRUST YOU, LIBBY. I HEAR WHAT YOU'RE SAY NG, BUT IT'S ALL JUST WORDS—YOUR GREEDY ACTIONS JUST DON'T CORRE..ATE.
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I EVEN WANT ANY PART OF IT?
THE TRUTH IS, YOU'VE ALREADY ABANDONED ME ONCE FOR SHEER PETTINESS. YOU'L.. DO IT AGAIN.
NO, I WON'T. I—
THERE'S THAT OLD COOT!

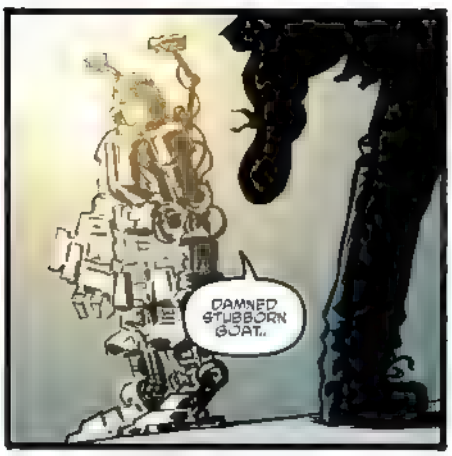
TAZE HIS SCRAWNY BUTT BEFORE HE BOLTS AGAIN!
NO!

KSSHH
LOOK OUT!


ACTION, NOT WORDS... AM I RIGHT?
THAT STILL DOESN'T—


ALERT! ALERT! SECURITY BREACH! ALERT! THIS FACILITY IS UNDER ATTACK!
WHAT THE...?
SOUNDS LIKE MY NEW PARTNERS HAVE ARRIVED. JUST LIKE I KNEW THEY WOULD.

IT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN TRYING TO TELL YOU— THERE ARE SOME THINGS MONEY JUST CAN'T BUY, LIBBY
LOYALTY, FOR EXAMPLE!


DAMNED STUBBORN GOAT.

MR. JAMMER, STATUS REPORT!
STILL CHASING LILJA, BOSS.
AND HATE TO TELL YA THIS, BUT THE INVENTOR'S HELPIN' HIM.
FORGET THEM...
...WE'VE GOT MORE IMMEDIATE CONCERNS TO DEAL WITH.
THE FOOT CLAN HAVE ARRIVED— UNINVITED AND IN FORCE.
PROTECT THIS BUILDING FROM THOSE DAMN NINJA, MR. JAMMER—YOU AND YOUR STREET PHANTOMS.
LETHAL FORCE AUTHORIZED.
THAT GOES FOR LILJA AND THAT TRAITOR MEITNER, TOO.
KILL THEM IF THEY GET IN YOUR WAY.

DARIUS DUN'S OFFICES ARE IN THE *UPPER LEVELS*—THAT IS WHERE THEY WILL BE HOLDING HAROLD LILJA. *FIND* HIM.
WE WILL DEAL WITH DUN.
AND, CHUNIN, REMEMBER...

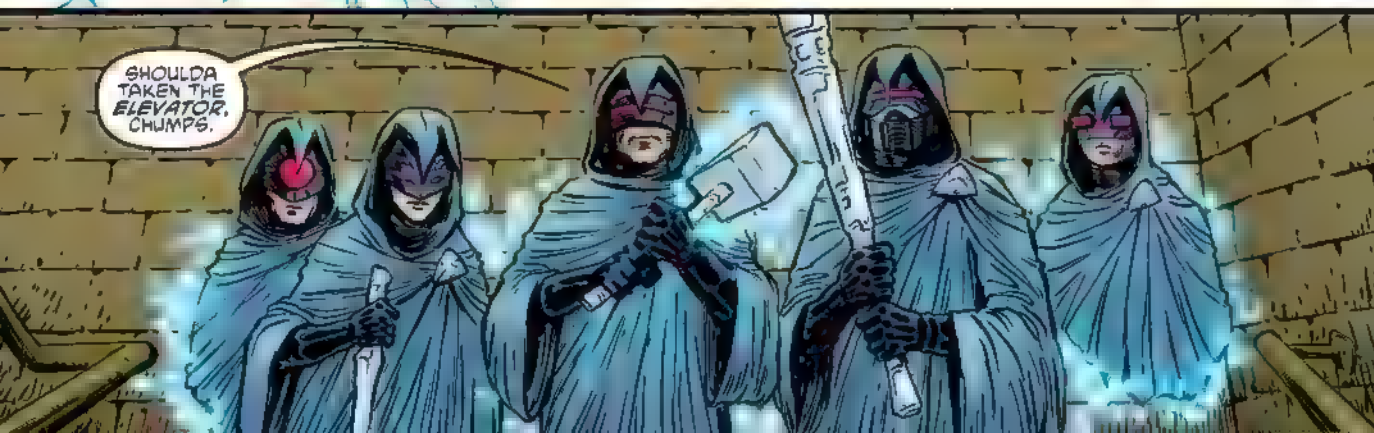
...HAROLD LILJA IS OUR *ONLY* ALLY HERE.
ALL OTHERS *MUST* BE DEFEATED.

UNDERSTOOD, MASTER.

WHY THE *DELAY*, BRO? MORE *TOP-SECRET* STUFF WITH SENSE?
LOOK, RAPH—*NONE* OF US LIKES BEING KEPT OUT OF THE LOOP, BUT THIS *ISN'T* THE TIME TO STAND AROUND AND *GRIPE* ABOUT IT.
THE PHANTOMS COULD BE *ANYWHERE*.

AIN'T *THAT* THE TRUTH.

KRSH


SHOULDA TAKEN THE *ELEVATOR*, CHUMPS.

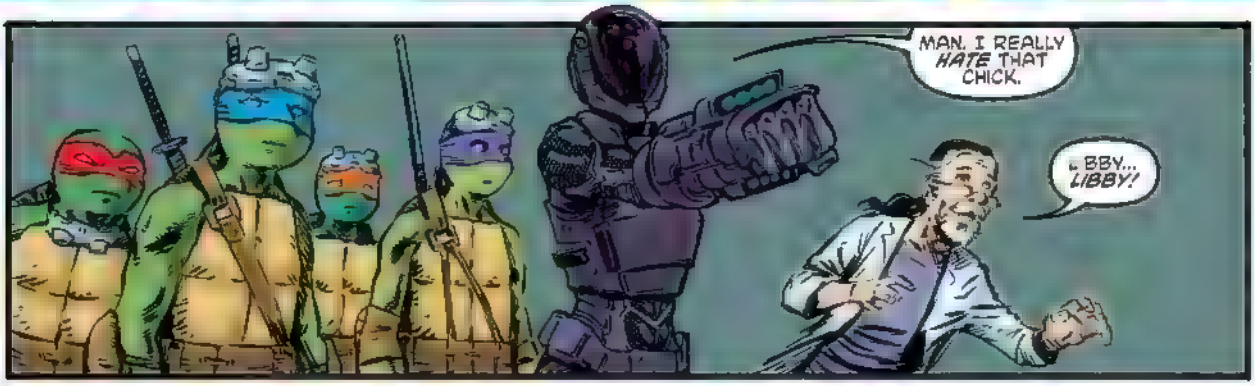
LEO!
I'M... GOOD.
WELL, THESE DIOTS WON'T BE FOR LONG.
REMEMBER— AVOID THE EMP GUNS.
WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE?
LIKE... THIS!
SKSH
NOT AGAIN, LITTLE RUDE RIDING HOOD—
—ONE ZAP'S ALL YOU GET!
KRAKK!!

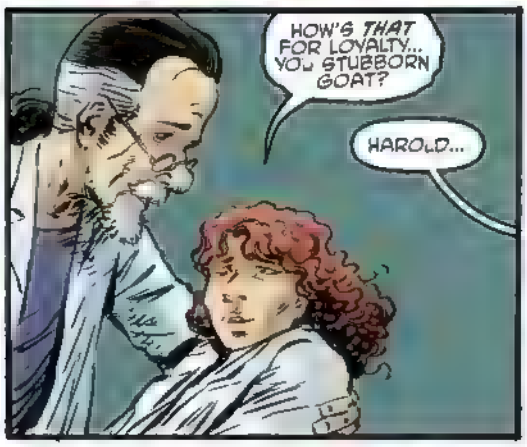
GUYS! THEY'RE GETTING AWAY!
ON IT!
WHA—
SORRY, JAMMER.
YOU CAN RUN ALL YOU WANT...
...BUT YOU CAN'T HIDE ANYMORE.
STINKIN' MUTANT!
NNFF!
WE REALLY OWE HAROLD SOME SERIOUS THANKS, GUYS...

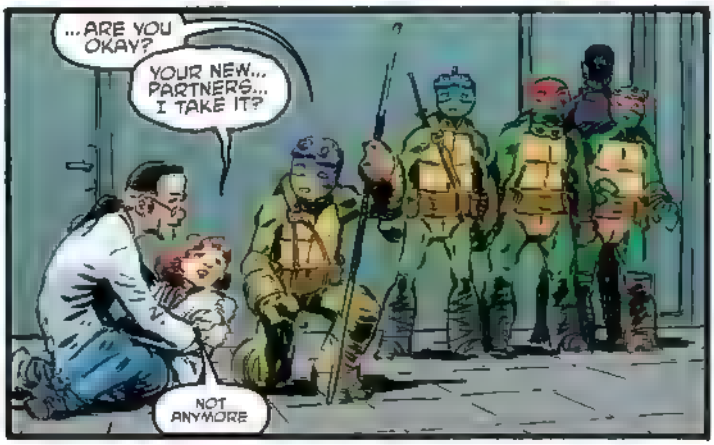
"...'CAUSE HIS NEW TECH RULES."
EXIT
HARRY! WAIT!
STOP CALLING ME HARRY.
OKAY—BUT HEAR ME OUT PLEASE.
SCIENTIST TO SCIENTIST, MAYBE, BUT SCIENTIST TO CYBORG?
FORGET IT
WHA... WHO?
FINE...
...WE'LL DO IT YOUR WAY.
SO, TALK.
LISTEN TO ME. I KNOW NOW WHAT I DID IN THE PAST... LEAVING YOU LIKE I DID... I KNOW IT WAS A MISTAKE.
TO BE COMPLETELY FRANK, I'VE KNOWN IT FOR A WHILE.
YOU'RE RIGHT—MONEY CAN'T BUY THE THINGS THAT ARE TRULY IMPORTANT. I THOUGHT IT COULD WHEN I LEFT YOU.
I MEAN, ALL THOSE WONDERFUL INVENTIONS YOU AND I CREATED TOGETHER—ALL THOSE AMAZING PATENTS WE SHARED—AND WE WERE STILL BARELY GETTING BY.
IT SEEMED SUCH A COLOSSAL WASTE OF TIME AND ENERGY... AND TALENT. ENDLESS HOURS SLAVING IN THE LAB AND NOTHING TO SHOW FOR IT...
...OR SO I BELIEVED.
INVENTOR

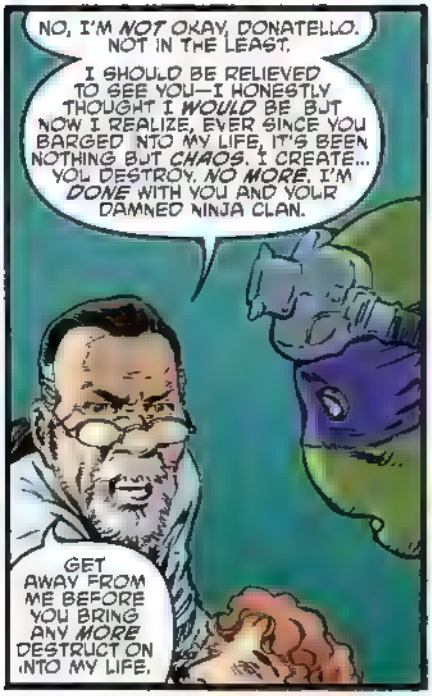
BUT THEN I STARTED WORKING FOR THAT APE DUN, AND I HAD MORE MONEY THAN I COULD SHAKE A SCOOPULA AT, AND ALL I COULD THINK ABOUT WAS WHAT I DIDN'T HAVE ANYMORE.
IT WAS YOU, HAROLD! I NO LONGER HAD THAT SATISFACTION— THAT INDESCRIBABLE, IRREPLACEABLE RUSH—OF CREATING WITH YOU... OF COLLABORATING WITH MY PARTNER.
MY HUSBAND.
ALL THE MONEY IN THE WORLD COULDN'T CHANGE ONE EMPIRICAL FACT—
—A FACT THAT BECAME BLINDINGLY APPARENT WHEN I SAW YOU SO INGENIOUSLY FIGHT BACK AGAINST DUN AND HIS GOONS TONIGHT.
I LOVE YOU, HAROLD.
I... LIBBY, I—
NO!
WHAT IN BLAZES?!
TRAITOR!
AAGHH!
SHK!!
LIBBY!
YOUR TURN, OLD MAN.
WRONG.

WHAP!


MAN, I REALLY HATE THAT CHICK.
...BBY... LIBBY!


HOW'S THAT FOR LOYALTY... YOU STUBBORN GOAT?
HAROLD...


...ARE YOU OKAY?
YOUR NEW... PARTNERS... I TAKE IT?
NOT ANYMORE

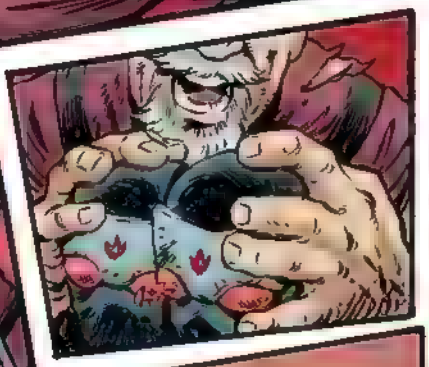

NO, I'M NOT OKAY, DONATELLO. NOT IN THE LEAST.
I SHOULD BE RELIEVED TO SEE YOU—I HONESTLY THOUGHT I WOULD BE. BUT NOW I REALIZE, EVER SINCE YOU BARGED INTO MY LIFE, IT'S BEEN NOTHING BUT CHAOS. I CREATE... YOU DESTROY. NO MORE. I'M DONE WITH YOU AND YOUR DAMNED NINJA CLAN.
GET AWAY FROM ME BEFORE YOU BRING ANY MORE DESTRUCTION INTO MY LIFE.

C'MON, DONNIE. ANGEL WILL GET HAROLD AND HIS FRIEND TO SAFETY.

EXIT
TIME FOR US TO GO...

"...WE STI... HAVE DUN TO DEAL WITH."
COME ON, THEN...

...LET ME SHOW YOU WHAT I WAS MADE FOR.



I AM IMPRESSED, DARIUS DUN.

IT WILL BE AN HONOR TO FIGHT YOU.
FATHER?
NO. HE IS MINE
FILTHY MUTANT!
SWSSH
YOU ARE A FORMIDABLE WARRIOR, TO BE SURE, DARIUS DUN.
BUT YOUR STREET PHANTOMS HAVE BEEN VANQUISHED...
UFF!
WHUMP
...YOUR NVENTOR LOST AND, DESPITE YOLR ADM RABLE PROWESS...
CHAK
...SO, TOO, ARE YOU.
TODAY BELONGS TO THE FOOT CLAN.

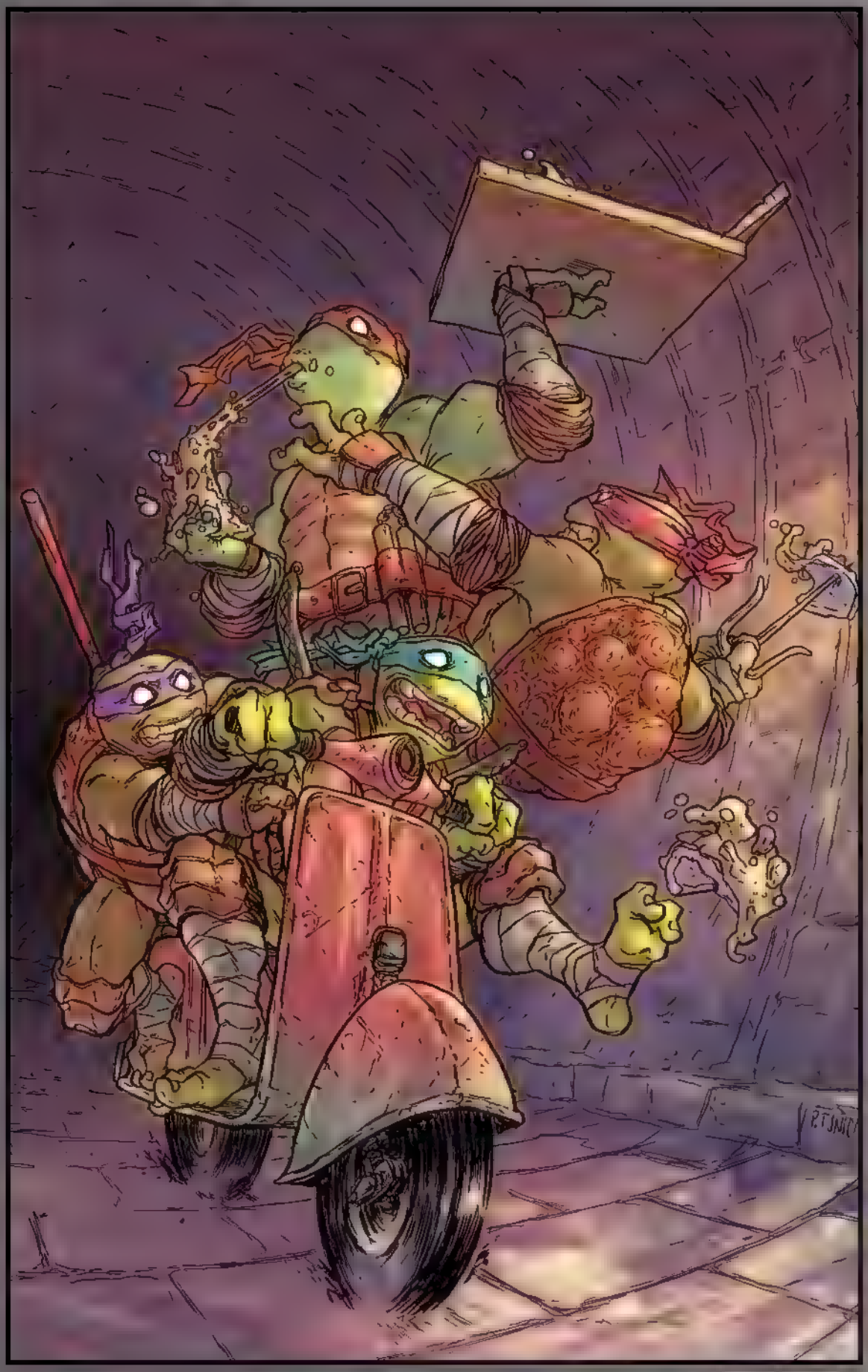
AS MASTER, I AM HONOR-BOUND TO OFFER YOU THE TERMS OF SURRENDER.
WE WILL TAKE CONTROL OF ALL YOUR RESOURCES—YOUR FACILITIES, YOUR FINANCIAL HOLDINGS, AND YOUR TECHNOLOGIES
EVERYTHING THAT WAS YOURS WILL NOW BE OURS.
WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT?
WE'RE GONNA STEAL ALL THEIR STUFF?
AND IN EXCHANGE, YOU WILL KEEP YOUR LIFE.
POMPOUS, DELUSIONAL RAT. MY LIFE ISN'T YOURS TO BARGAIN WITH.
I'LL NEVER SURRENDER TO YOU.
I SWEAR TO YOU, SOME WAY, SOME HOW, I WILL DESTROY YOU, MUTANT.
BUT NOT BEFORE I FORCE YOU TO WATCH YOUR PRECIOUS GREEN MONSTERS DIE SLOW, PAINFUL, PATHETIC DEATHS...
...RIGHT BEFORE YOUR BEADY LITTLE RODENT EYES.
VERY WELL...
ASSASSIN.
NOW.

HRGK!
THUMP
WHOOSH
HOLY!
THEY KILLED HIM!
AGAIN... HE DID IT AGAIN.
I... I CAN'T, GUYS. I CAN'T DO THIS ANYMORE.
IT'S TOO...
...INSANE.
MIKEY'S RIGHT. HE'S BEEN RIGHT ALL ALONG.
YEAH. THIS AIN'T US.
NOT ONE STINKIN' BIT OF .T.

FATHER? WHY? WE HAD DUN BEAT. THE STREET PHANTOMS, TOO. THAT SHOULD'VE BEEN ENOUGH!
INSTEAD, YOU TURN US INTO CROOKS...
...AND MURDERERS?!
VICTORY REQUIRES THE FORTITUDE TO CRUSH OUR ENEMIES AND ABSORB THEIR TREASURES IN ORDER TO SUSTAIN OURSELVES, LEONARDO.
WE MUST BE STRONG IN ALL THINGS.
THIS ISN'T STRENGTH! THIS IS...
...THIS IS WRONG!
NO, MY SON. THIS IS WAR.
AND THIS IS HOW IT MUST BE.
IN ANOTHER LIFETIME, I SWORE TO YOUR DYING MOTHER THAT I WOULD DO ALL IN MY POWER TO PROTECT YOU AND YOUR BROTHERS FROM THE DANGERS POSED BY THE FOOT CLAN. TO KEEP YOU SAFE AND ALIVE.
I FAILED THEN... AND I AM FAILING NOW, IN THIS SECOND LIFE WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN.
YOU AND YOUR BROTHERS ARE NOT SAFE WITH ME. PERHAPS YOU NEVER HAVE BEEN.

I HAVE KEPT SECRETS FROM YOU, AND I APOLOGIZE FOR THE RUSE, BUT *NOT* THE PURPOSE.
THE STRONG LOYALTY YOU ALL POSSESS FORCED *DRASTIC MEASURES* ON MY PART TO ACCOMPLISH MY GOAL: TO SEND YOU FROM THE DANGERS THAT SURROUND ME AS MASTER OF THE FOOT CLAN.
IF I CANNOT PROTECT YOU WHILE YOU ARE *IN* MY CARE, PERHAPS I CAN DO SO BY DRIVING YOU *AWAY*.
YOUR BROTHERS HAVE MADE *THEIR* DECISION, AND NOW *YOU* MUST DO SO AS WELL.
I CAN NO LONGER *LEAD* THEM, LEONARDO...
...THAT DUTY NOW FALLS TO *YOU*.
I...
...I *UNDERSTAND*, MASTER.
REMOVE THE *CLOAKS* FROM THE PRISONERS.
AND THEN *WHAT*, HUH? GONNA SLICE AND DICE US, TOO?
NO. THEN YOU ARE *FREE* TO GO.
AND WHEN YOU DO, BE CERTAIN YOU *SHARE* WITH OTHERS LIKE YOURSELVES THE *IMPORTANT LESSON* YOU HAVE *WITNESSED* THIS DAY.
THE FOOT CLAN IS *NOT* TO BE TRIFLED WITH.

KEVIN EASTMAN
TOMI BARGA


PABLO TORICK

MICHAEL WALSH

art by DAMIAN COUCEIRO

art by ERIC JONES

A NEW AGE BEGINS FOR THE TURTLES AS THE EPIC EVENTS OF THE PAST HAVE CREATED NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE, BUT NEW DANGERS AS WELL. WHILE THEY CONTINUE TO GET USED TO A WORLD LEADING THE FOOT CLAN POST-SHREDDER, THEY RETURN TO THE TECHNODROME TO MONITOR THE REVIVAL OF THE UTROMS ON BURNOW ISLAND AND ARE SURPRISED TO MEET A NEW MUTANT-LEATHERHEAD! BUT, WILL THE MYSTERIOUS MUTANT BE FRIEND OR FOE? PLUS, KITSUNE STILL POSES A THREAT, AND A NEW GROUP, THE STREET PHANTOMS, ENTERS THE FRAY!

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